



On Ohmigod Lake, Fall of 2020

# messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 38 – Number 12

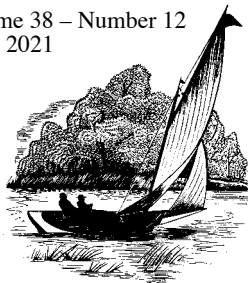
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## On the Cover...

*Atlantic Coastal Kayaker* publisher Tammy Venn checks her US Geodesic Survey Map on the wilds of New Hampshire's Lake Umbagog ("Lake Ohmigod") on an annual fall adventure outing on inland waters with her husband, David Eden, who edits their online kayaking magazine. Not your usual chart checkup for a small boater but appropriate to the locale surrounded by the forests and low mountains of New Hampshire's remote (for New England) northern tip. Her story starts on page 6.

2 – *Messing About in Boats*, April 2021



## Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor

With a new season now getting closer we're beginning to see and hear about some of the planned events and activities that were cancelled last year with promises to "see you in 2021." Now, as I write this on March 1, 2021, the overall covid 19 situation is still in turmoil. We do hear of a number of sports facilities planning on opening up at 10-25% capacity, admitting only those who have been vaccinated or tested negative, all sorts of limitations. Who's to know even a month from now what is going to be allowed in the way of public gatherings?

In last year's April issue I launched a series of articles encouraging interested small boat folks to support the 50th Anniversary Small Craft Workshop at Mystic Seaport. The event, scheduled as part of the WoodenBoat Show at the Seaport the end of June, was to be organized and managed by the local John Gardner Chapter of the TSCA. By June they both had been cancelled in the face of the covid 19 pandemic.

So now "see you next year" time is at hand. Anticipating that another effort to host the event this year might happen, we featured in our March issue as our "25 Years Ago in *MAIB*" article, Sharon Brown's "Honoring John Gardner." It was timely, having first appeared on our pages 25 years ago and pointed ahead to the upcoming celebration this year of what John had wrought.

We have learned that the Seaport has decided to separate the Workshop from the WoodenBoat Show this year, scheduling it for the Memorial Day weekend instead of the end of June. This means that the Workshop, for many long years on its own until it was folded into the WoodenBoat Show in recent years, is back on its own again. We have now heard, just in time to publish it in this issue, from the John Gardner Chapter this advance word of what they are planning:

"The John Gardner Small Craft Workshop will be held Memorial Day weekend, May 29-31, 2021, hosted by the Traditional Small Craft Association's John Gardner Chapter. In addition to having a booth to acquaint show attendees with the TSCA, there will also be demonstrations of skills that enhance the traditional small boat experience. The Mystic Seaport Museum Boat-house watercraft will also be available at no charge for participants to use.

All traditional small craft enthusiasts, as well as TSCA members, are encouraged to attend with or without your own boat! There is plenty to do if you don't bring your own vessel. Launching and parking details will be posted with registration materials.

On Saturday and Sunday mornings, before Museum hours, there will be a cruise open to all workshop attendees. We will gather at the Australia Beach and cruise either upriver past the highway bridge to the salt marshes or downriver past the village and classic yachts on their moorings.

Workshop participants can register to stay onboard the *Joseph Conrad*.

Attendees will be encouraged to help with the workshop, either by manning the booth at Australia Beach for a two hour period and/or giving a demonstration of some skill such as sail rigging, sculling, boat building, hardware making, etc. If you have a skill that you would like to demonstrate at the show, please volunteer. Your demonstration should last about an hour and will be held at 11am, 1pm and 3pm each day. Indicate your interest in staffing the booth or demonstrating a skill on the registration form or **contact Bill Rutherford at smallcrafter@gmail.com or 860.222.5249.**

Should you consider attending, and understanding that things may change by the end of May, here is a summary of the Seaport's covid 19 restrictions as of December 2020:

"Note that exhibit spaces and vessels have limited capacity to ensure safe distancing.

Masks or cloth face coverings are required on Museum grounds.

Observe 6' social distancing at all times.

Respect signage including social distancing markers, one way traffic and maximum occupancy in exhibit areas.

Do not enter certain areas roped off where difficult to maintain social distancing.

Restrooms will be limited to one person or family at a time.

If you or someone in your party is experiencing covid 19 CDC defined symptoms you may not enter. If you believe you may have been exposed to the coronavirus we ask that you do not visit at this time.

If you are visiting from one of the states that Connecticut requires a ten day quarantine upon arrival, do not visit until your quarantine is complete."

Up to date info on all this will be on the Seaport's website as will the registration forms, etc, for the Small Craft Workshop. For specific details about the Small Craft Workshop **contact Bill Rutherford at smallcrafter@gmail.com or 860.222.5249.**

Can we hope this event will be a re-opening of our world to gathering again with like minded folks? I hope so and am planning on it.

## A Sailor is Never Alone

The first rule of sailing  
old salts will say  
is to stay aboard

It takes a lifetime  
to learn to sail a boat  
but just a day to love her

The art of sailing  
is to know the wind  
and leave nothing to chance

A sailor is never alone  
in the presence of the wind  
with a boat to sail

Little vessels  
meant for but one to sail  
hold the fullest joy

Only a fresh breeze  
can rid the soul  
of the pains of this life

A Storm Lived at Sea  
To confront a storm  
alone and at sea  
is to argue with God

The ocean like God  
senses every mistake  
and yields no mercy

Sailing is playing chess  
with the gods of the sea  
and praying for a draw

A storm lived at sea  
is a mirror to the soul  
reflecting our deepest fears

Only a fresh breeze  
can blow from the soul  
the pains of this life

An old wooden yacht  
idles alone in a boatyard  
dreaming of the sea

## Déjà Vu

They say you never look upon  
the same river twice  
and I suppose that is true enough  
to the eye of one grounded ashore

but softly reaching here down stream  
on this cloudless April day  
I recognize the shapely turn  
of the banks as they form  
the wide run of this bitter brine

flowing on until the turn of the tide  
welcomes the waters' return  
up the river's long reach  
channeling the murky flow  
back from whence it came

Then I will ghost my way  
up again past shore-bound  
watchers who wonder  
at a single-handed sloop  
working its way home once more

## At Sea Threads, Yarns, Musings and Verse

By Randy Cadenhead



## Toying

The seas toy with their prey  
tossing about with their  
wind-wisped arms in  
this contest with the idle gods

daring all who would  
cross their dominion  
to fathom the powers  
that reside in the dank depths  
of their fickle ways

They wait in timeless patience  
to assay the mettle  
of each waterlogged soul  
who dares to try  
the tempest test of the sea

Of such is the trial of  
survival in the infinitely  
capricious game of life lived  
on the surface of the seas

even on this day  
with one sogged soul  
so much more home  
among watery gods  
than locked upon the land

## A Star to Steer

Heading down to the sea again  
I gather my seafaring gear  
and set an ambling eye  
on a day of going where  
the wind and the waves  
will me to wander

Travelling nowhere slowly  
I know well that when this day  
that is all I could ask for  
is done and the night has come  
I will be left with the gift  
of a star to lead me home

## Changing Channels

Passing down a route  
I have sailed time and  
now once again  
into a narrow channel  
heading home once more  
from a long day at sea

I turn and gaze back  
wishing for one more tack  
onto a downhill run  
and out onto the  
open and lonely sea

away from this shallow track  
that leads once again  
to a weary world of need  
anchoring me to arid land  
and empty dreams

wishing again for a place  
where the water runs free  
and the wind breathes unbound –  
and so with a bow to its fresh call  
I turn my tiller back to sea

## Return to the Sea

Nearing the water  
anticipation rises  
with the scent of the sea

Like waters and rivers  
we must return to the sea  
in our own due time

Sailing the ocean  
carving a path through the deep  
the sea swallows my wake

No sound is louder  
to a sailor on the sea  
than its silence

Peace joy and wonder  
doubt terror fear and remorse –  
a life lived at sea

## Soundings

The voices of the sea  
in all their tunings  
haunt my silent hearing  
drowning the sounds  
of this life on the land

All I sense are the  
echoes of evenings  
soft at anchor or  
hard on the wind  
reaching for the bitter  
ends of the horizon

Here in the clatter  
of the city I sit and  
savor the memory  
of lapping waves and  
the joy of a windswept sea

frothing in my mind  
whispering me home  
sounding the sea  
in the songs of the wind



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**Joseph Conrad**  
***The Mirror of the Sea* (1906)**

"I had been some time at sea before I became aware of the fact that hearing plays a perceptible part in gauging the force of the wind. It was at night. The ship was one of those iron wool clippers that the Clyde floated out in swarms upon the world in the seventh decade of the last century. The ship of which I think, with her colored glass skylight ends, bearing the motto, "Let Glasgow Flourish," was certainly one of the most heavily sparred specimens. I was the junior officer in her, third mate, keeping watch with the chief officer, and it was just during one of the night watches in a strong freshening breeze that I overheard two men in a sheltered nook of the main deck exchanging the informing remarks.

Said one. "Should think 'twas time some of them light sails were coming off her." And the other, an older man, uttered grumpily, "No fear! Not while the chief mate's on deck. He's that deaf he can't tell how much wind there is."

It generally happened in this way, night, clouds racing overhead, wind howling, royals set and the ship rushing on in the dark, an immense white sheet of foam level with the lee rail, the chief mate, Mr P, hooked into the windward mizzen rigging in a state of perfect serenity."

**Virgil**  
***The Aeneid* (25 BCE)**

"Now night drawn by the hours had not yet reached

The midpoint of her course when Palinurus  
 Turned out briskly. Studying the winds,

He cupped his ears to catch  
 movements of air;

Observed the slowly wheeling constellations

In the still heaven: bright Arcturus, rainy

Hyades, Great Bear and Little Bear,

Orion in his belt of gold. All clear

In cloudless air he made them out to be,

Then gave a trumpet signal from the stern.

So we broke camp, put out to sea, unfurled

Our wings of sails. The stars had  
 vanished, dawn

Was reddening the sky, when far ahead  
 We saw the blue hills and low-lying plain  
 of Italy...."

# **Stories** **From the Days of Sail** **Part 3 of 6**

Submitted by Duncan Wright  
 Reprinted from JGTSCA News Notes

## **The Environment** **Listening to the Wind**



**David Barker**  
***A Manual of Elementary Seamanship***  
**(1929)**

The cirrus cloud is "the most significant of all clouds in weather forecasting. The appearance of cirrus clouds is, as a rule, the first indication of a change in weather."

**Alan Watts**  
***The Weather Handbook* (1999)**

Stand with your back to the wind. Look high up. If cirrus clouds are arriving from your left, a warm front is arriving with "almost certainly increasing wind." Because cirrus clouds are so high, it is sometimes difficult to detect their motion without measuring their movement against some relatively fixed object like a mast. If you need to do that, the weather may deteriorate but a full gale is unlikely. "However, if you can concentrate on a cirrus element or two and, unaided, see them moving against the background of the sky, you are looking at clouds carried at 100 knots or more," and a severe storm is in the offing.

**Gershom Bradford**  
***A Reader of the Sky* (1966)**

"Want a tow, Cap'n?" said the skipper of the tug to the captain of the big four-master nearly becalmed off Boston Harbor with sails gently thumping as she rolled easily to the low swell. "It was mild, a pleasant haze lay over the land and sea." It was Saturday, November 26, 1898.

"No, Jim. I might as well be here as in Mystic. Tomorrow's Sunday," replied the schooner captain, being idly tied up to a wharf in the Mystic River was, in his view, hardly a better choice than waiting offshore for a breeze. "The crew lounged about as lazy and unruffled as the vessel herself."

Jim courteously tossed a copy of the latest newspaper onto the deck of the schooner and, with a wave of his hand, rang up the engine. He turned to see a three-master a short distance southward. "It was a singularly contrasting scene, all was activity, seamen rushing about while the master paced nervously at the wheel."

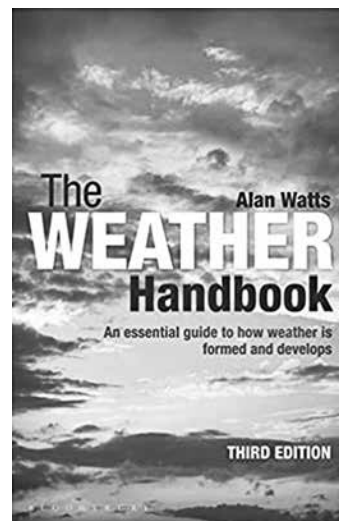
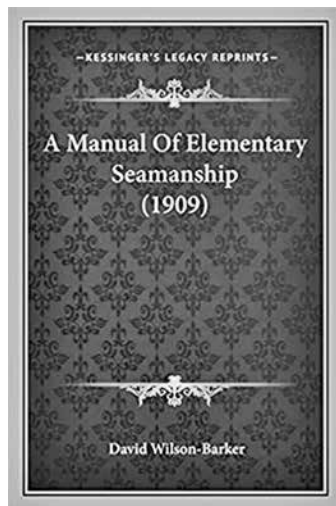
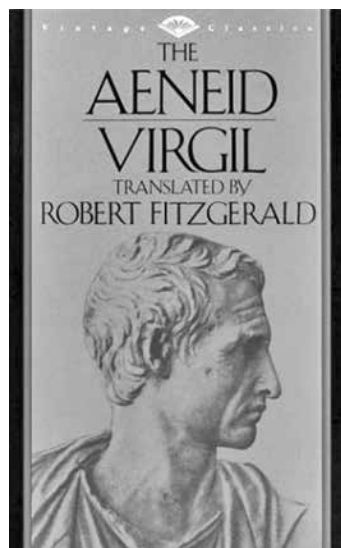
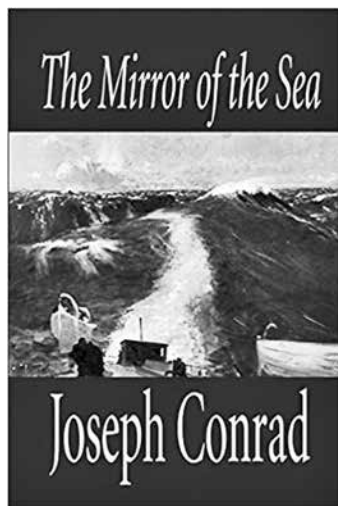
"Want a tow, Cap'n?" Jim called out.

"Yes, get me damn quick out of here," the captain replied. The crew of the tug were perplexed by all the excitement in fine weather. But the Portuguese captain of the *Lavinia Snow* had seen something others had not, a movement of high cirrus clouds that to him were "the outriders of a furious storm."

The tug began to tow the schooner 40 miles to Boston Harbor. "Soon the weather began to change, an easterly breeze, thickening overcast and rising sea. It began to snow, the wind reaching a gale." As they reached the entrance to the harbor, the steamer *Portland* "passed them to her doom."

The tug, at one point almost losing control of the ship, slowly pulled the schooner further up the harbor to a safe anchorage. "There, with two anchors down and a long scope of chain out, she rode precariously through that ferocious night."

The next morning the tumult eased, people ventured to the shore and saw "the desolation of wreckage in every form." "That big four-master with its placid crew of a few hours before had no chance to claw off the rocky lee shore at the entrance to Boston Harbor. All that could be identified amidst the chaos of sails, spars and timber was the quarter board bearing her name." The crew of the *Lavinia Snow* were grateful to have sailed with "a genius in weather wisdom."





# Inland Paddling



*One of the reasons to go late season paddling on New England lakes is the glorious exposition of colors. The western shore of Umbagog Lake just south of the inflow of the Androscoggin River. (David Eden)*

## LAKE OHMIGOD

**By Tamsin Venn**

**U**mbagog Lake (Um-BAY-gog) in the Great North Woods of New Hampshire (think north of the White Mountains) is a great place to paddle in the fall when shores light up with flames of yellow and orange from the birches and scarlet red of the maples, tucked into a green wrap of spruce, fir, and pine. That is when we went, but we plan to return next summer and explore more. You should come, too.

Remote Umbagog Lake, just 40 miles from the Canadian border, manages to shake the leaf-peeping crowds that areas farther south attract. Full of wildlife, it is popular with hunters and fishermen, and we were happy to learn from our research we would be there during turkey and deer archery but not shotgun season. Along with our masks, we wore neon orange caps.

Umbagog is a big lake, 11 miles long running north to south, with 50 miles of shoreline. It has a lovely state park campground at the southern end for a convenient paddlers' base camp plus 33 remote campsites and four remote cabins (Ellis Camps) in isolated locations around the lake accessible only by boat. Almost all the surrounding acreage is held by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) so shorelines are undeveloped and wildlife protected and plentiful, as we found out when paddling there the first week in October.

We started preparing by finding a map. Trained by the idea that you can't arrive at places and expect to buy a map at HQs that are no longer open due to COVID-19, David looked at three topo maps online, used photo shop to turn them into one map, printed it out, then waterproof-taped it, and added a mileage scale. Voila! our map of the lake. If you don't go the homemade route, you need two topo maps, Umbagog North and South, to cover the whole lake. We also relied on the 8x10 sheet campground map handout with remote sites' numbers, to help tell us where we were.

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail also produces two maps to take thru-paddlers from the Androscoggin across the lake to the Dead River and onto the Rangeley Lakes in Maine (or vice versa).



Click each picture to see the full-size, downloadable map file.

The state campground, right on Rte. 26, is on the compact side, and tenters will prefer the forested sites on the west loop. Unfortunately, the best tent sites are near the road, and large, noisy tractor-trailers occasionally pass by at all hours. On the other hand, as it was either pouring or blowing hard each night we were there, those natural sounds, familiar to any camper, did a lot to drown out the grinding roar of the passing trucks. That drawback is countered by a fabulous location, looking down the length of the lake, and mountains beyond, with a sand beach, picnic tables and grills, plus a launch area that paddlers share with motorized fishing boats. It also has a small camp store and place to buy firewood. When using remote sites, you can safely park your car here.

Lake Umbagog gets its name from the Abenaki term meaning "shallow water." The average depth is 10 feet although there is a deep hole with depths more than 40 feet in the north end. Originally, it was a series of three shallow lakes connected by marshes and swamps, but Errol Dam flooded the area in 1853 to form the lake here today. It is fed by the Magalloway, Rapid, and Dead Cambridge Rivers, and is the source of the Androscoggin River. Indeed one trip suggestion is to go down the Magalloway River to the lake, then up the nearby Androscoggin. All is flatwater in this section.

Umbagog is said to be one of the most pristine lakes in New Hampshire inhabited by such wildlife as coyotes, wild turkey, bald eagle, osprey, bobcat, moose, rabbit, bear, loons, deer, and many other native species. There are 100 nesting boxes placed around the lake for wood ducks and hooded mergansers. Keep an eye out for moose, otter, and mink in the Magalloway River, and ponds off the left in the Androscoggin River, or in any of the numerous coves on the lake.

In 1992, the feds bought the first tracts of land for the Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge which is currently 25,650 acres. The shoreline is quite wild and undeveloped, with just a smattering of private homes, most of the houses are on the southeast end of the lake, where Route 26 touches the shore.

First day we launched from the campground's sand beach to avoid the gravel and rocks at the official launch site. Since dogs are forbidden on the beach, we carried Milly, our Jack Russell, into the floating boats. We crossed the mouth of the long cove that stretches east from the campground to an island to the northeast (our maps don't have many named features). The

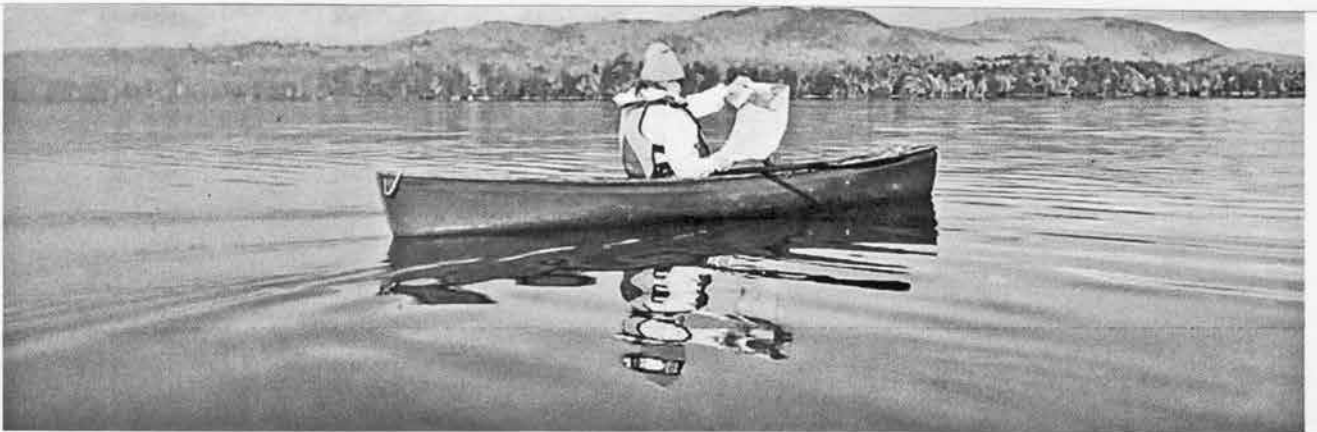


Dead Cambridge River flows into the base of the cove. Its many twisting meanders (hence "Dead") looked tempting to explore, but we are limited in time and so crossed from the island to the mainland and stuck to the eastern shore of the lake up to Tidswell Point where we had read the scenery was some of the best on the lake. We had to agree, as we turned 90 degrees paddled East along the point. Then we made a short crossing to the Blake Islands, one a private island with a house, the other with a beautiful paddle-in campsite.



*David leaves the beach at the Umbagog Lake State Park campground. (Tamsin Venn)*

This is a very nice area and featured some fun in-and-out paddling among the islands. It was beautiful and calm, and because we were paddling with the rising sun, everything glowed, especially the trees that been turning. We were in peak season, with not too many reds, but plenty of oranges and yellows from the birches. Every every object you could see looked bejewelled, said David.



*"...every object you could see looked bejewelled." Tammy consults our home-made map. (DE)*



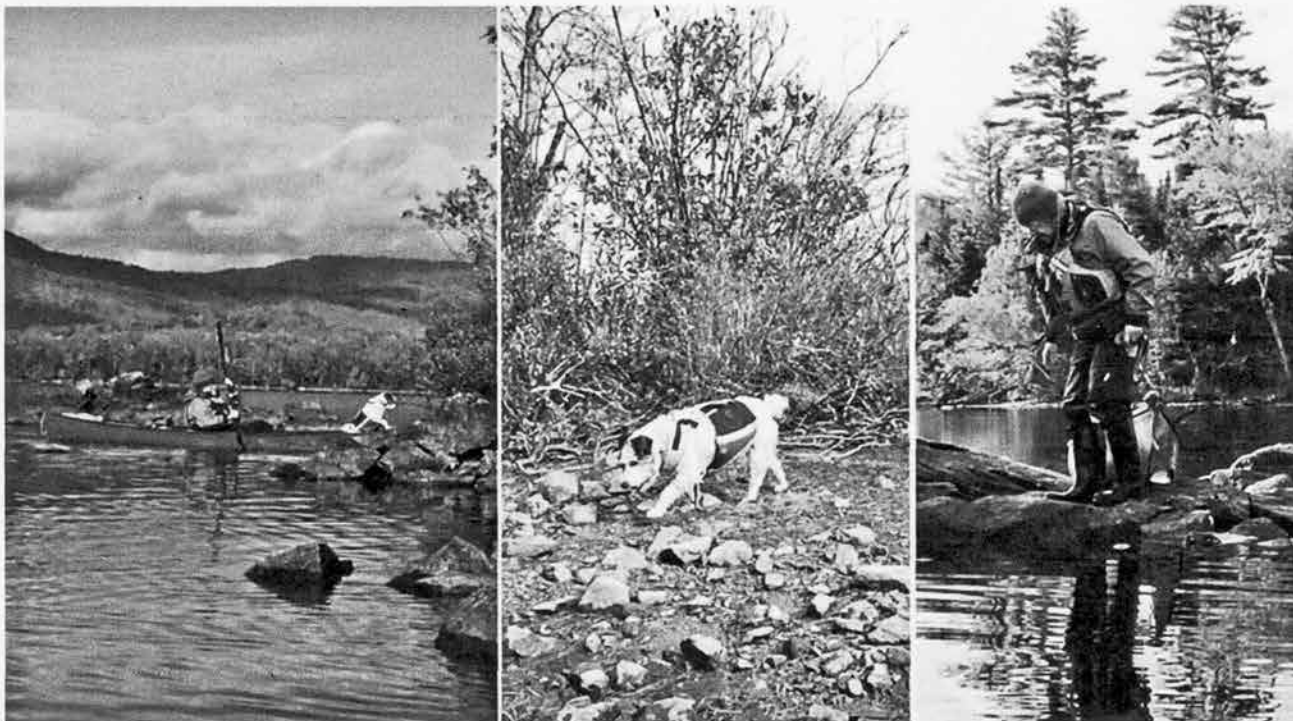
*In-and-out paddling amongst the Blake Islands. (DE, DE, TV)*



We headed northwest to Bear Island, made the long crossing southwest to Big Island, a landmark many try to aim for and/or circumnavigate. The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests acquired the 156-acre island in the 1980s, transferred ownership to USFWS 2012, but the campsite use continues with six sites managed by the state park. Number 10 is particularly nice.

We stopped on a couple of rocky islets to let the dog run around. We saw two other paddlers stopped at an empty campsite for a break but no campers. Wildlife spotted were limited to a pair of loons, two mergansers in flight, and several kingfishers.

We paddled along the north shoreline of Big Island, past the mouth of Thurston Cove, and made a long crossing to the west shore of the lake. By now, a strong southwest wind had risen, clouds had come in, and our paddle home, about 2.5 miles, was pretty much heading into it. Waves never got huge, with not much fetch given the direction of the wind at that time. We left at 8:30 and completed the seven-mile circuit in three hours with stops.



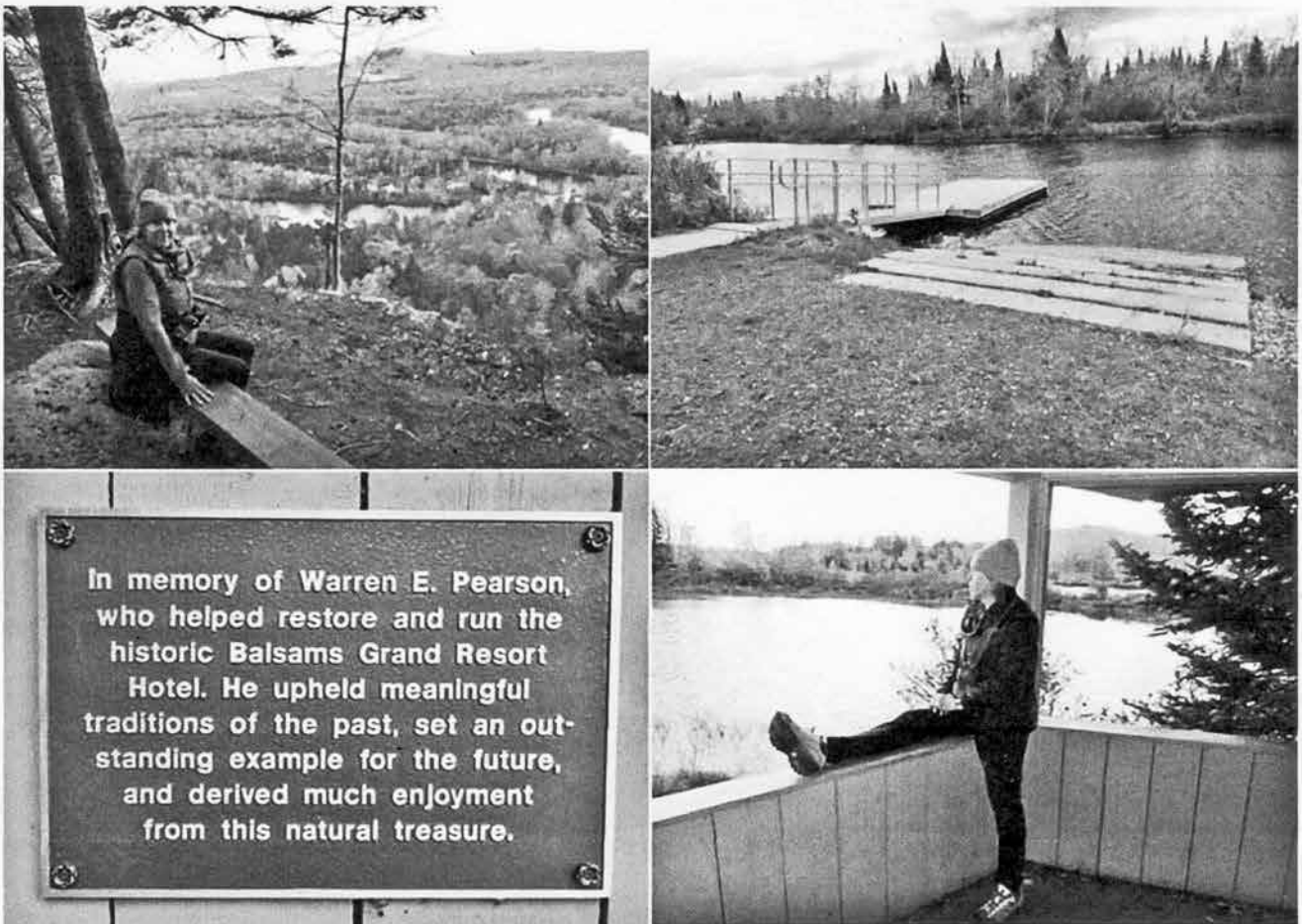
*Milly will not snooze in a boat, and she does get bored, so stops to let her run around are necessary. Sometimes we have to get out, as well, to persuade her to re-embark. (TV, DE, TV)*

In the afternoon, because the wind stayed quite strong, we decided to go hiking and check out put-ins for the nearby Magalloway and Androscoggin Rivers for the next day. We drove the seven miles to Errol, the main hub, then up Route 16 north that shadows the rivers. Here, the USFWS HQ is a good launch site into the Magalloway, a trip we did about 20 years earlier after paddling the Rangeley Lakes in Maine.

USFWS has created two local trails worth stretching your legs on. The Roost is a hump with a steep cliff face overlooking the Magalloway River. It has a very impressive view of oxbows and logans creating a confused maze in the flat valley between surrounding hills. At the Roost parking area is another launch site into the Magalloway with a swish-looking ramp and information kiosk. Clearly, USFWS welcomes paddlers.

Next we ambled along the Magalloway River Trail, handicapped accessible, made of wide, flat, gravel and sand, with wooden walkways through a very moist forest, blanketed in spagnum moss, part of the very extensive marshes, bog forests, and bogs that form much of the area

around the lake. It has a covered viewing gazebo, dedicated to Warren Pearson, the general manager at The Balsams resort in Dixville Notch for 30 years. He loved this spot. Each walk about 1.13 miles, or a little under an hour.



*Clockwise from top left: The valley of the Magalloway from the Roost. The swish launch at the USFW parking lot across from the Roost trailhead. The viewing kiosk on a logan of the Magalloway. Bronze plaque on the kiosk honoring Warren Pearson. (DE)*

Day two, we paddled the Androscoggin section between the Errol Dam and the river's source where it flows out of the lake. Our trip was 7.2 miles in three hours with stops.

The main access for the northern part of the lake is on North Mountain Road, which puts you in just above the Errol Dam. However, the next mile or so of the river is entirely parallel to and without any blocking from Route 16 so we put in at the Steamer Diamond Boat Launch about a mile up route 16 on the right with room for only about five cars. Steamer is also right off the road, and overnights would be advised to park in the main launch spot in Errol.

From there you go straight into the Androscoggin and leave Route 16 and its roaring trucks behind. Technically the Androscoggin from here to the lake is paddling upstream, however the current is very weak. This is a very marshy area and the current is hardly noticeable. Instantly you can see how it would be a fabulous place for moose and waterbirds because you are surrounded in many places by marshes, sometimes hidden by narrow bands of forest along the river. In places the main channel is fairly obvious, but in others, we had to explore a bit before choosing the right way. Shortly after a large embayment on the left, you come to the entrance of the Sweat Meadows, a very shallow area, surrounded by marsh, supposed to be great for seeing moose and other wildlife. Best moose viewing is dawn and dusk.

We saw several duck blinds which you can reserve from the refuge.



*Tammy's boat makes a spearhead of silver heading upstream. (DE)*



*Reflections on the river. The weather, though steadily darkening, kept off long enough to let us get some spectacular pictures. (top to bottom: TV, DE, TV)*





Top: Time for Milly to switch boats. She likes the variation. (DE)

Bottom: David checks to make sure this is indeed the channel leading into the lake. (TV)

Between where the Androscoggin and Magalloway Rivers access the lake is an area known as Leonard Pond and Marsh, renowned for wildlife viewing. The area has many channels, and it is best to consult a map to work your way through here.

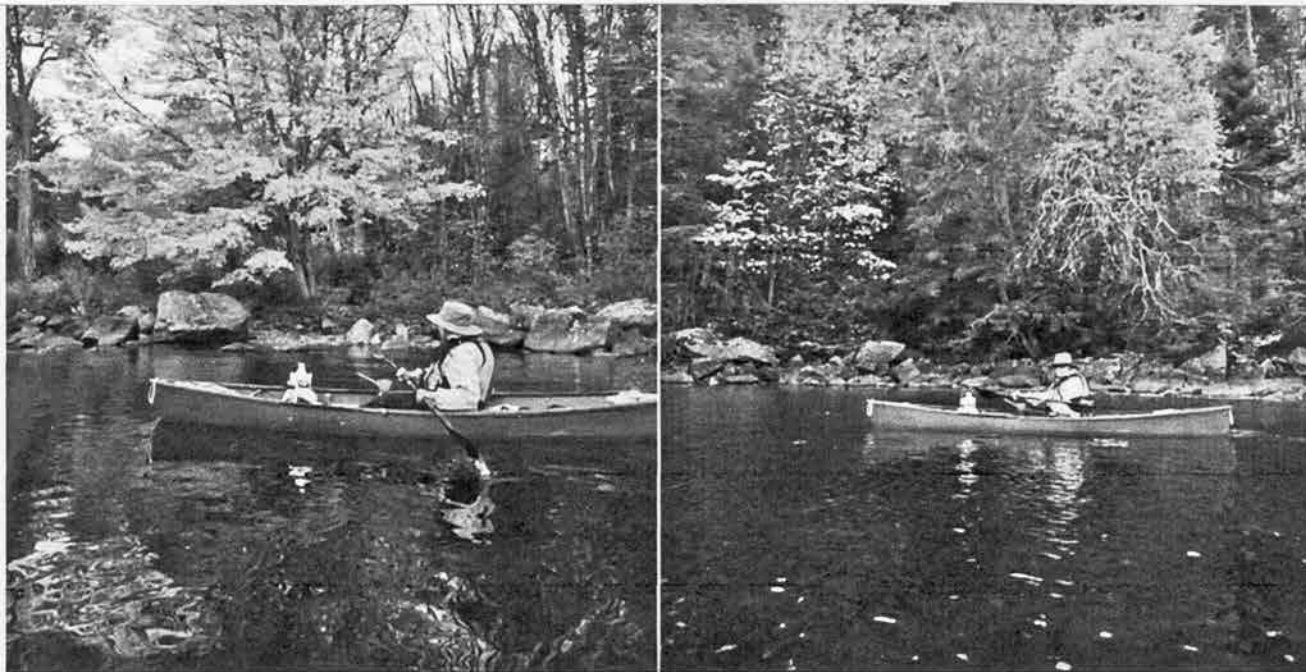
Soon we were out on the open lake and the relatively closed-in views expanded nearly two miles across the lake. We turned right to explore south a bit and check out the Ellis Camps, four nice-looking separate cabins (Honeymoon, Jenny's, Ben's, and Ellis) perched on the shore a few hundred yards south of the Androscoggin. We also checked on a couple of campsites, #25 and #27, both dog friendly; #27 was preferable with a sandy landing on the south side of the rock ledge that leads up to the campsite.

These are at the base of what is known as Moll's Rock.

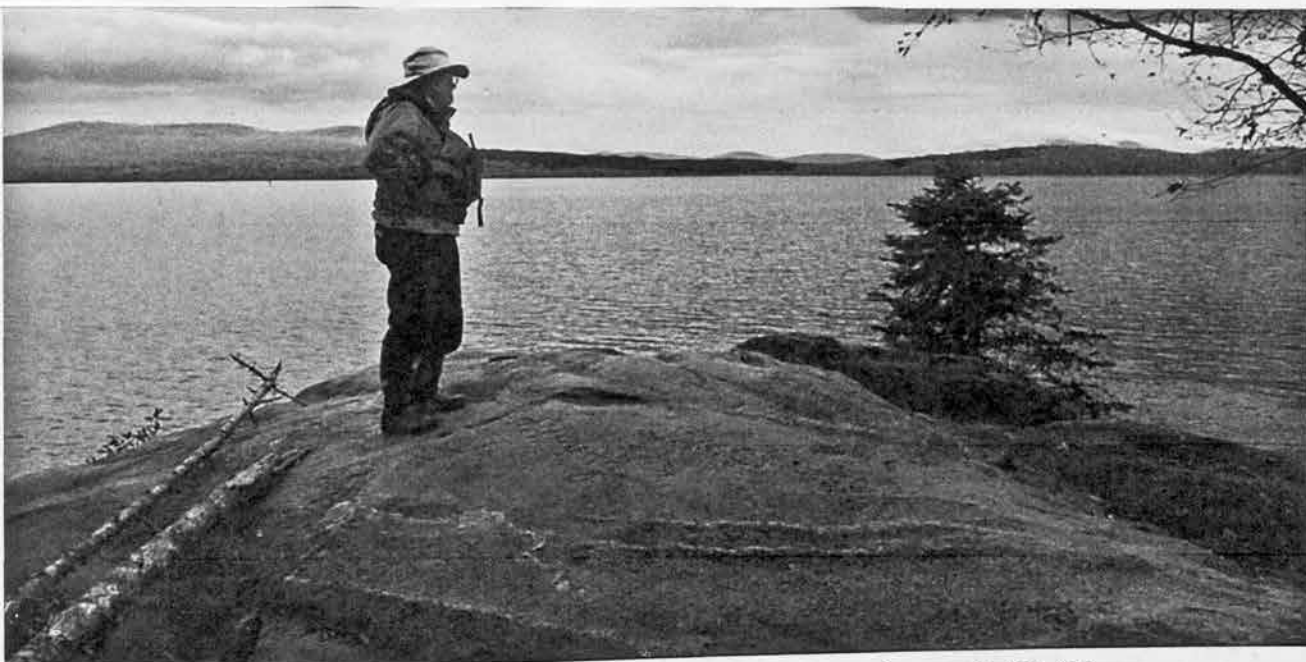
*Moll or Molly Ockett, born circa 1725-1744 in Saco, Maine, died August 2, 1816, Andover, Maine, was a Native American woman of the Abenaki nation who lived in the regions of northern New Hampshire and Maine during colonial times. Her Abenaki name meant 'Singing Bird,' but she was also baptised and given the name Mary Agatha. This was most likely pronounced as 'Molly Agat' or 'Molly Ockett' by Abenaki speakers." (Wikipedia)*



Another site on the lake that memorializes a famous First Nation personage is Metallak Island. Hunter, trapper, fisherman, and guide, Metallak was well and favorably known by the region's early settlers. "The lone Indian of the Magalloway" was the last survivor of a band of Abenaki inhabiting the upper Androscoggin. Blinded by accidents, Metallak died a town charge in 1847 at the reputed age of 120, and is buried in Stewartstown, N.H., near the Vermont border. Meanwhile, Moll was known to have enjoyed sitting on the rock and gazing out at the lake. The rock is at the popular group campground site 27 where visitors can jump off the low rock into the waters.



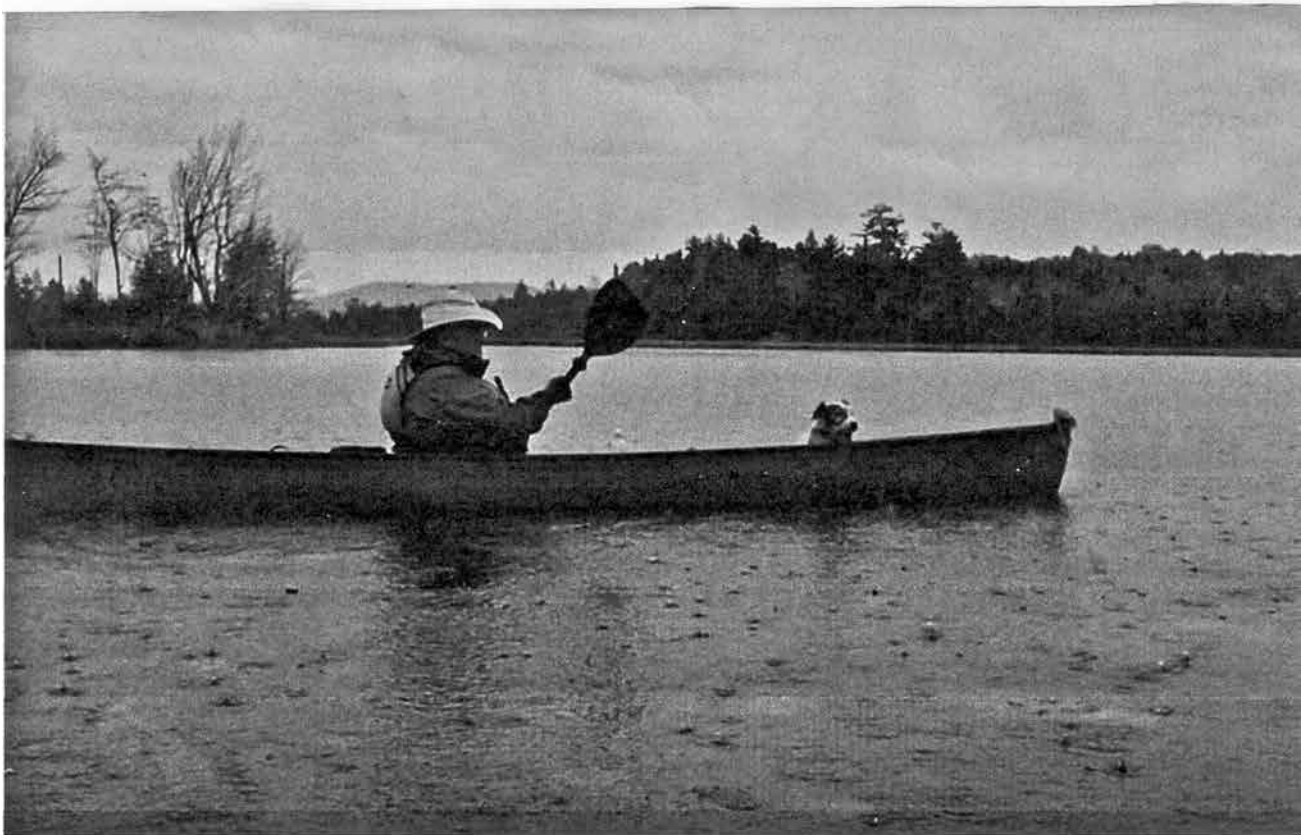
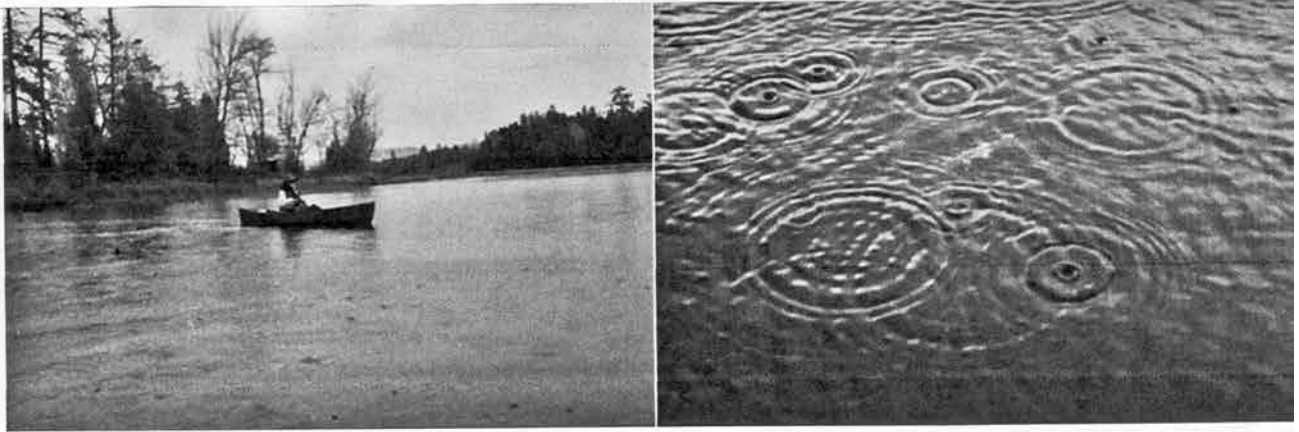
*Too much of a great thing? Even more autumn beauties on the western shore of the lake. We are headed south towards Moll's Rock. You can just see the roof of one of the cabins at Ellis Camps behind the yellow branches of the beech tree in their left-hand photo. (DE)*



*David gazes out over the lake as did Moll Ockett did 160 years ago. This is now the landing for campsite #27. (TV)*

We essentially had this whole trip to ourselves. We saw one lone duck hunter in a heavily camouflaged kayak, who said he had been coming here for years and had never seen so few ducks. We also saw a hunting skiff with two hunters or fishermen. A few shots rang out. We did not have our orange hats on.

Weather called for southwest winds at 15-20 mph gusting to 45 with rain starting by the early afternoon. We lucked out, conditions remained calm and overcast, and only started pouring when we had almost reached Steamer Diamond launch.



*Top: It started spitting as Tammy poked her nose into the very shallow Sweat Meadows. (DE). She took this interesting shot of raindrops pocking the surface. (TV)*

*Bottom: It's full steam for the take-out as the rain starts in earnest. (TV)*

As mentioned one can never be too careful on the crossings of the width of this lake. Prevailing winds are out of the north and northwest, which can cause waves to build over a long fetch. Paddling early in the morning or in the evening when winds die is always a good Plan B.

The most drama witnessed was a parent loon teaching its youngster to fish, and passing fish deftly into its beak, while another loon floated far off in the distance. This is always fascinating behavior, as the loons call to each other when they separate too far. The call we heard was a strange one, a single sliding note, maybe the family's unique "where the hell are you?" call. We also saw an osprey, several kingfishers or one that followed us all the way up and down the river.

## If you go...

### Umbagog Lake State Park Campground

Has 27 sites, all with electrical and water hook-ups, three cabins. We lucked out and got #31 after switching from #32, which was really not great. Other good sites include watersites #43, #42, and #41; and non-water sites #38, #36, #33, #31, #28, #27. Nice, big, new shower building. You can also rent canoes and kayaks here, of the aluminum and plastic variety. (Your instincts to rescue someone are probably right.) [Make your reservation here.](#)

### Remote Campsites:

The closest to the campground are less than a mile and the farthest seven plus miles. For northernmost sites you would consider putting in at Errol and paddling the Magalloway or Androscoggin Rivers. Best remote sites that we saw (not scientific) include 27 on the west shore, 32 on Blake Islands, and 10 on Big Island. You must make reservations, and many are dog friendly.

### Itineraries:

USFW has a great site on Umbagog. [Boating trips and tips here.](#)

### Launch Areas

- 1) Umbagog State Park on Rte. 26
- 2) Umbagog public boat ramp in Sargent Cove on Rte. 26
- 3) Androscoggin ramp just before bridge into Errol from the east, Rte. 26, North Mountain Rd
- 4) Androscoggin River Steamboat Landing on Rte. 16, north of Errol
- 5) Magalloway River USFWS headquarters on Rte. 16, north of Errol
- 6) Magalloway River about two miles north of the HSFWS HQ, on Rte. 16

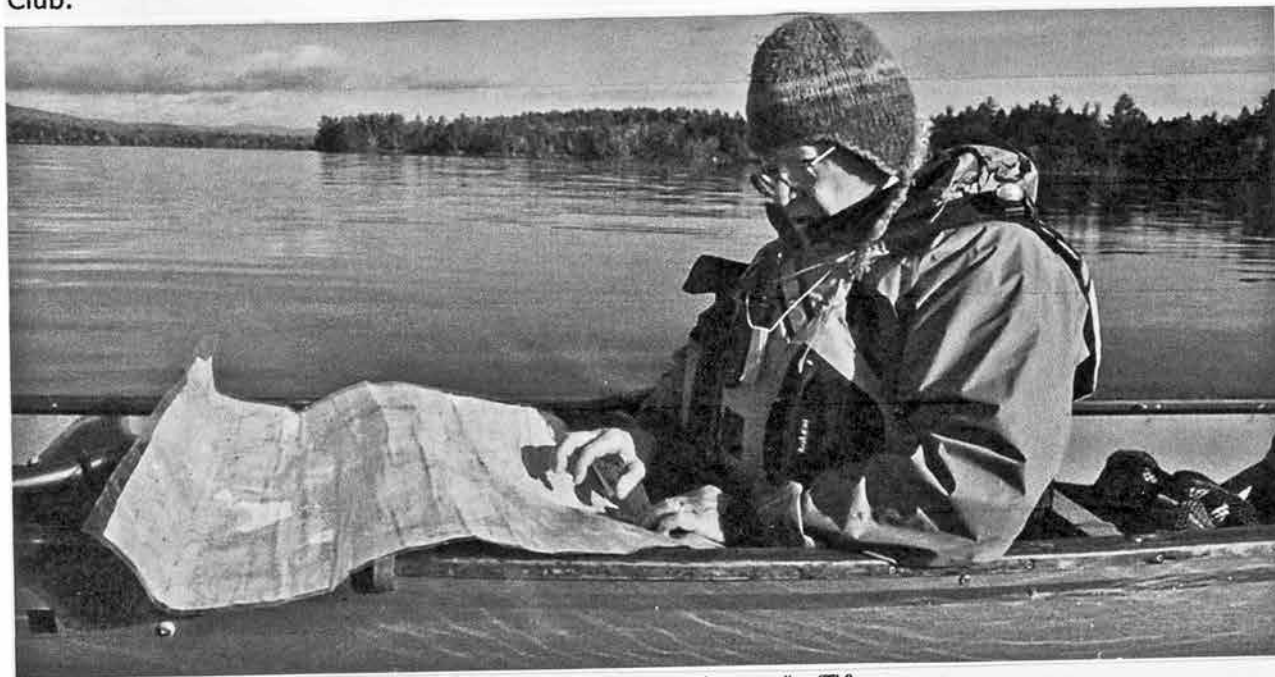
### Resources

Topo Maps: North and South Umbagog Lake

Northern Forest Canoe Trail Maps # 7 and #8

Guidebooks: *AMC Quiet Water Guide* New Hampshire and Vermont (one book); and Maine.

*We Took to the Woods* is Louise Dickinson Rich's account of living in Forest Lodge overlooking the Rapid River published in 1942, a regional classic once selected for The Book of the Month Club.



*There is nothing like having a good map on a trip. That finger spread equals one mile. (TV)*



# The MacLeod Birlinn



Reprinted from *Dinghy Cruising*, Journal of the Dinghy Cruising Association UK

by Keith Muscott

**T**EN OR ELEVEN MACLEOD CHIEFS down the family line from Alasdair Crotach (see panel, right) brings you to Norman MacLeod, who was alive when Martin Martin visited Hirta in 1697. 150 years had passed; birlinns and galleys had changed in a number of ways and had generally become smaller, but we can form a reasonable picture of the 'Steward's Galley', which Martin saw in Village Bay, Hirta, by inspecting the tomb of the eighth MacLeod chief in St Clements church.

Fifty years before Alasdair Crotach's death, when he was in his early forties, there was a Crown Charter (1498), granting lands in Skye and Harris to the MacLeods, that states as one of its terms, '...they were obliged to keep one ship of twenty-six oars and two of sixteen each, for the service of the King, in peace and war.' There was nothing new in this strategy; Robert the Bruce had divided his enemies by requiring the use of a defeated clansman's galleys and crews as part of the peace treaty.

It is possible that one of the last remaining examples of the birlinn as a dedicated warship belonged to the

(Above) St Clements at Rodel, Harris, taken in the mid-19th century.

This is the only intact pre-Reformation church in the Hebrides. Alexander MacLeod (1455-1547), 8th Chief of Clan MacLeod, repaired the old 'Cathedral' of St Clement at Rodel and built a richly decorated tomb for himself inside (bottom left). Alexander was known as *Alasdair Crotach*, 'the humpbacked'. In his youth he had been called on to lead the clan against a raiding party of Clanranald MacDonalds during his father's absence. In the mêlée, a son of Clanranald wounded him in the back with his battleaxe. Alexander brought his assailant down and killed him with his dirk, then cut off his head and carried it home as a trophy. But he never recovered from his wound. The muscles of his back had been severed and he 'stooped ever after, from which he got the appellation of 'Crotach', or humpbacked'.

He died in 1547, and was buried in the table tomb he had prepared for himself, which combines gothic and Celtic motifs, in the Cathedral of Rodel; he was the first MacLeod Chief to be interred outside Iona. Among several interesting carvings crowning his tomb the most important is of his beloved birlinn (see panel on the wall and the close-up, below). It is the clearest image of a Highland birlinn to survive. (Also see the drawing of it on page 82.)





Macleods of Harris and Dunvegan (and probably another to Clanranald, the MacDonalds), and the carving in the tomb at Rodel is the best representation we know of the Hebridean type in use in the mid-16th century.

The 'Steward's Galley' in 1697 may have been borrowed from the MacLeod chief for the annual trip to Hirta, but Martin would surely have mentioned that in his account, out of courtesy to his friend and laird, so it is reasonable to say that the Steward, also an 'Alexander MacLeod', had a birlinn all to himself, and kept it on the Isle of Pabbay, which lies in a strategic position commanding the western entrance to the Sound of Harris. Being stationed on the western seaboard it was always ready to be of service to the Chief — or King.

The Elizabethan galleons with their gunpowder and ordnance had made the big galleys obsolete. In a fighting *longfada* or *langskip* the armament and defence was all carried in the hands and on the backs of her crew: broadswords, axes, longbows, aketons, chainmail, shields and helmets. Firearms and cannon were in a different league. The early 17th century saw the end of them as a potent force in naval engagements. They were still built for another 100 years, but they continued to dwindle in size and number. By the time Bonnie Prince Charlie arrived on the scene there was no cohesive Highland naval force, though there were still birlinns hauled out on shores here and there for the Royal Navy to destroy with grapeshot after it became clear that Culloden was not being accepted as the end of the fight.

The galleys had also been important to the Highland economy in a number of ways, not least in transporting mercenaries to Ireland, but that ended with the Union of Crowns. With the resources of Scotland and England behind him, King James had no longer any real grounds for fearing the Lords of the Isles, despite his vexation with the islanders of Lewis in 1605, who (he said) delighted 'in blood, theft, reiffe and oppression', escaping capture and 'assisting one another against his Highness and his authority'.

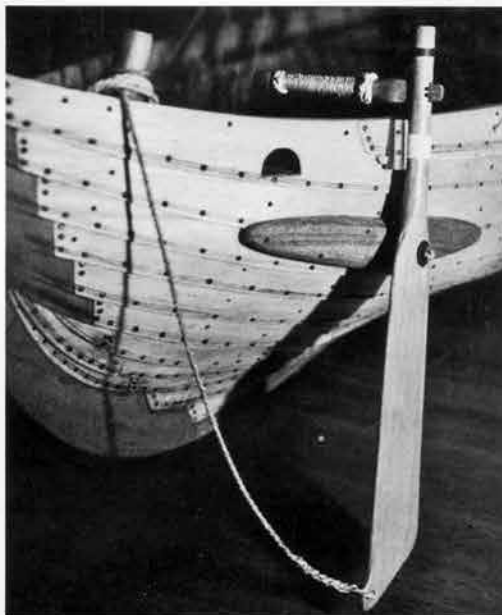
In 1697 Martin Martin's concern for the failing Scottish economy was well founded. The galleys had earned their keep, but now the opportunities had all gone and there was no longer any economic reason to build them, except for the prestige earned by doing so.

The Rodel galley (*see next page*) had existed in an earlier golden age and Alasdair Crotach might have kept a number of similar vessels in his hidden base, but this one would have been the biggest, a flagship — his pride and joy. There are two clear design details that set it apart from Norse boats and make it especially Hebridean. First, it clearly draws more water than the *Karve*, its close Viking equivalent (*see Oseberg and Gokstad ships*). Speed has been traded for stability and sailing performance, especially to windward. In the Hebrides a big vessel had to perform well on all points of sailing.

Next, there is no quarter-mounted *styr-bord*, the immediate successor to the steering oar, that had operated in the same position. Instead there is a modern-style rudder, with gudgeons and pintles to



Rodel Harbour and Bay from the air: snug, sheltered, invisible from offshore, hard to enter without insider knowledge and easily defended. It was at the heart of MacLeod operations in Harris, close to the eastern entrance of the rock-strewn Sound of Harris, which led to the Atlantic.



(Left)  
Norse *styr-bord* on the 'starboard' quarter of a Viking model boat. It was superseded by the well-known arrangement, still in use today, of a stern-hung rudder held by pintles and gudgeons, with a tiller inserted through the rudderhead to be operated by a member of the crew in the stern

hold it, mounted centrally on the stern post. The carving clearly shows spaces chiselled out of the leading edge of the blade to facilitate lifting it clear of the hardware in order to stow it on board or ashore, or even to allow it to kick up slightly if it hit an obstruction at sea. The height of the rudderhead suggests that a tiller could be offered up through a suitably large hole in the sternpost, then slid through the rudderhead to be pinned in position. Failing that, a push-pull tiller extension might have been fitted to a tiller aligned at right angles to the run of the boat, as with the *styr-bord*.

Unlike the faster Norse *Karve*, or *Carbh* in Gaelic, there is no rocker to the keel. This means that the heel of the rudder remained in the water and gripped it without standing proud of the keel and being vulnerable, and still functioned at moderate angles of heel. Norse rocker would have helped to increase manoeuvrability when under way; the flat birlinn keel would help the boat take the ground and sit comfortably on a beach.

The sculptor knew that galleys were heraldic symbols

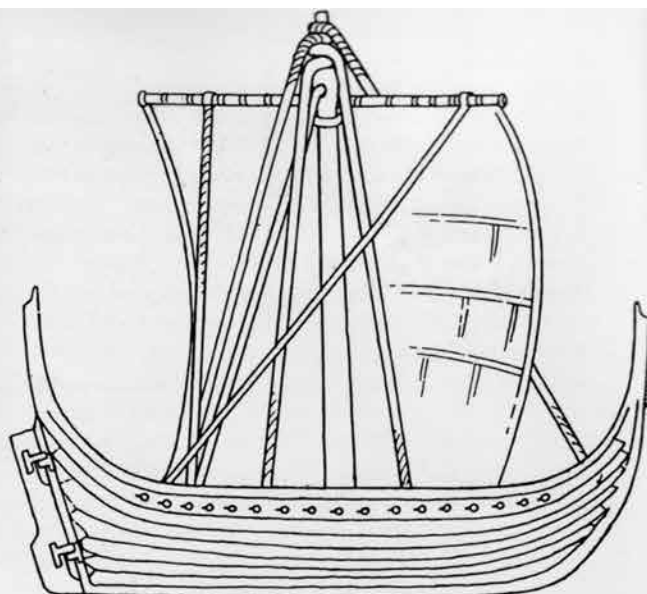
of power and status, but he wished to carve a realistic image of the boat, too, thankfully. It has the greatest number of oar ports of any vessel depicted in the West Highland series of galleys in stone carvings: seventeen, implying 34 oars in total. This suggests a complement of 100+ crew, three to an oar, or less with a regular change of rowers on a long haul, or some of the crew being required to fight intermittently while under way.

The ports are furnished with slits so the oars can be mounted from inside the boat, starting with the insertion of the narrow seagoing blades — and that operation would have called for a high level of practised efficiency on the part of the oarsmen to larboard and starboard. Deploying oars from the outside inwards would have been a chaotic nightmare in big seas, and very unhandy in calm ones — so it wasn't done.

Irish, and probably Highland galleys had round oarports with a diameter of  $\pm 5$  inches (12/13 cms) and the slit allowed a blade width of  $\pm 6.75$  inches (17 cms). These dimensions are very similar to the oarports of the Gokstad ship. It is also likely that oars could be shipped and held ready for action in loops or grommets secured to the thwarts, especially in warships. The optimum distance between thwarts was  $\pm 3$ ft (91 cms) between centres, based on the range of recovered ancient Nordic boats available for us to examine, so probably the LOA of the Rodel galley was 75ft or slightly over (22.86 metres).

Maldwyn Drummond, sailor and historian, has pointed out that thwarts in Royal Navy cutters were 3ft apart, too, but he did not accept his own reasonable analogy. He went on, unreasonably, to posit a distance of only 2ft between thwarts, that gives him a LOA of just 44ft (13.25 metres) '...which seems more in tune with ordinary shipbuilding of the time.'

That really is an ungenerous estimate. Look at the Oseberg Ship, and it is not the longest to be uncovered; it is a *Karve* or *Carbh*, built like a light Birlinn but 70.8ft in length. The men on the oars in a birlinn were not slaves; they were taller than average, high-ranking, well-



fed, probably with a great deal of Norse blood in them, and they considered it a great honour to be chosen as crew. They knew that songs would be sung to spread their fame if they fought well and successfully. Big men needed room to pull an oar or to unship it. As *Aileach's* crew bent to their strokes in 1991 (see pp85-86) they agreed that thwarts of 39-inch centres, not 35, would have given them the comfort of not striking the back of the man in front when fully extending for the first stroke, or burying their head in him if he was still sitting upright. Seven oars over a 35ft 6ins waterline instead of eight would have given them what they wanted. Perhaps the point is that on a Norse longship, as on a Naval cutter, men moved strictly in unison — or else. The Vikings knew the visible power of a big synchronised crew. There was nothing like the effect of full shield racks on both gunwales as they approached, and the sight of so many rowing as one was a metaphor of ruthless determination.

'He is named Helgi: you never can  
Hope to do him harm.  
His ships are surrounded by shields of iron:  
No wishes can work against him.'

*The Lay of Helgi*, tr. WH Auden & Taylor

The Scots birlinn never carried shields above the gunwales, as far as is known.

Alasdair Crotach engaged a gifted artist to portray his favourite galley, and he created an impressive three-dimensional image. The strakes, narrow and nearly vertical at the ends in some cases, curve outwards amidships, where the shipwright has widened them as the beam broadens. They overlap the sternpost and stem, so their strength integrates with the stern and bow, unlike the planking of Viking longships.

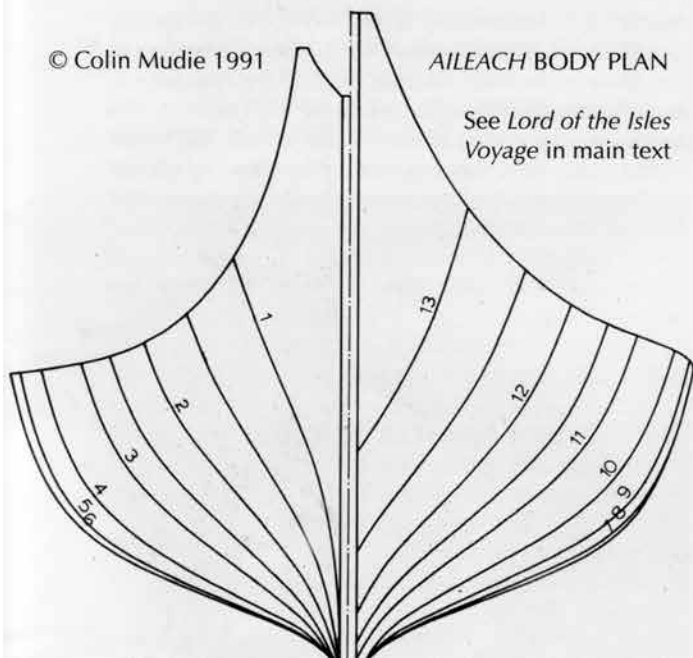
The hull starts with the keel, then six strakes follow, then the oar strake and finally the gunwale:

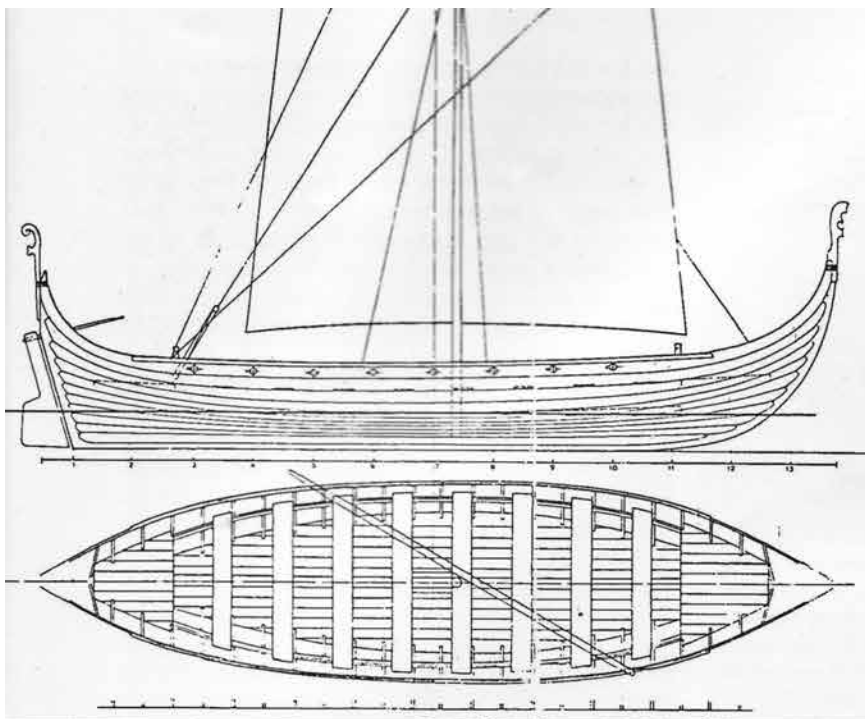
'The sense of depth achieved by the Rodel sculptor is unique in the West Highland series. The forestay presses against the sail from behind; the strakes curve out to meet us amidships. By comparison, on the much

© Colin Mudie 1991

AILEACH BODY PLAN

See *Lord of the Isles Voyage* in main text





© Colin Mudie 1991  
Colin's drawings for AILEACH

starboard fore shroud, starboard aft shroud, halyard and parrel, the latter keeping the yard close to the mast when raising and lowering the sail. There is no sign of port shrouds up there at the hounds, which might suggest that there were positions at deck level to relocate to port the two shrouds we can see set up to starboard, when tacking and changing the attitude of the sail, to give the squaresail more freedom to align hard on the wind — or more likely they were omitted to avoid cluttering the picture at the top of the mast...

Tacking would have involved careful control of the two yard braces first and then the (unseen) sheets. In bad conditions a number of the large crew would have been enlisted to help the four men in charge of these.

earlier stone at Texa the clinker planks are indicated by simple incised lines,' writes Denis Rixson, in *The West Highland Galley*.

The sculptor avoided the easy option of showing rigging by 'simple incised lines'. It is carved and stands proud, which has led, ironically, to some commentators suggesting spars and poles, not ropes.

The mast shows the hole, called a *hun-bora*, that was bored through the suitably fat upper section for the halyard to be rove through. This would have been well greased, as it was a blind sheave with no pulley wheel, and the yard would have been heavy. The ropes forming the standing rigging have spliced loops that simply drop over the masthead, gunter-rigged Mirror Dinghy-style.

From the masthead down, we have: forestay, backstay,

There is some difference of opinion about the horizontal and vertical lines on the back of the square sail — do they show lines of reef points with hanging pennants, or the sewn edges of patches of cloth, usually woollen, sometimes flaxen, which is how the sails were made? The lines in the drawing are misleading, having been sketched as prominent and sharp by the draughtsman who copied the image from stone to paper. The photograph is better, as it shows the forestay pressing against the back of the sail quite clearly (which is missing in the drawing) and the lines on the back of the sail are faint compared with the cordage that is bold and clear elsewhere.

Sails do not survive under water or underground, so it seems there is no archaeological evidence to prove the use of reefing points and pennants on birlinns or any other type of long ship. We need to look at written records and poetry.

The best description of a birlinn and how it was handled is found in the famous long poem that tells of the blessing of a Clan Ranald MacDonald birlinn prior to launching it. It was written by Alasdair MacDonald of Moidart (c.1695-1770). He was born just too late to see much of the boats, but he was party to the clan's collective memory and its experience of them, and it is probable that the chief still owned one or two during the poet's early life. He was a cousin of Flora 'Speed Bonny Boat' MacDonald, the saviour of Bonny Prince Charlie. The poem is a hymn of praise for the birlinn, and calls for blessings to be bestowed on it and the weapons, the equipment, all the crew and their jobs, right down to the man who had to bale out the boat continuously:

'A thick round wooden baling-can  
In his swarthy hands,  
Throwing out the sea forever...'

(translated by Hugh MacDiarmid)

I looked carefully at the verses that deal with tending the sail. In describing the control of it in heavy wind and







Building replicas of Norse vessels is a interest that started long ago. *The Viking* is an exact copy of the Gokstad ship. (Note the Gokstad Faering being towed along behind.) In 1893 Captain Magnus Andersen sailed her across the Atlantic from Bergen in Norway to New York and on to the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, via the Erie Canal and Great Lakes. She is 78ft long and presently located in Geneva, Illinois at Good Templar Park.

squalls the poet refers to several different men and their responsibilities on board, including:

*(A sheet's man was set apart)*

Set too on the thwart a sheet's-man

With great arms ending  
In horny compulsive fingers  
For the sheet tending  
pull in, let out, as is wanted,  
With strength of grabbing;  
Draw in when beating to windward,  
The blast crabbing;  
And release when the gust again  
Ceases rending

*(There was ordered out a tacksman)*

Dispose another sturdy sailor,  
Masterfully,  
To keep the tack to her windward,  
and deal duly;  
The tack to each cleat his changing  
up and down bringing,  
As a fair breeze may favour  
Or ill come swinging;  
And if he sees tempest threaten  
Against the shock  
Let him shear the tack without mercy  
Down to the stock

*(translated by Hugh MacDiarmid)*

There is some difficulty at first in understanding the role of the 'tacksman' who handles the sheet, as we have already been introduced to the horny-handed 'sheet's man' in the previous stanza, whose skill also resides in playing the sheet like a dinghy sailor. But on a square

sail, the tack is the windward clew (lower corner) and also the line holding down that corner; so the man playing the windward sheet had the more expert job when on the wind in a blow. Or has MacDiarmid understood 'tack' to be the windward end of the yard? The original text mentions belaying pins, not cleats, and this man controlled the yard braces, which were led aft to the stern, like the sheets. They are not otherwise mentioned. When the vessel changed tacks to present the other edge of the sail to the wind, and that clew became the tack, did the men change position?

More importantly, I can't read anywhere that a team tackled the heroic job of rolling up the sail from the bottom and securing it with reef pennants... that would have made a striking verse of poetry, if it had happened. Neither do I see any sign of them being able to secure the sheets further up the edges of the sail after reefing — no cringles are evident, just heavily reinforced hems, which presumably had the sheets stitched inside them.

When I look closely at the best photograph I have of the carving, I am convinced that the faint marks in the back of the sail are there to indicate the lines of stitching that secured the patches of woollen cloth together to make the sail. The sail vanishes into the interior of the hull, of course, so we can't see the take-off points of the sheets and yard braces at deck level. Were these sails ever reefed, or were they just de-powered by the yard being lowered steadily, or rapidly, as needed, and the sail's angle to the wind being managed carefully? Or were the sails trussed *upwards* to the yard?

On *Aileach* in 1991-2 (see pp57-8), the mainsheet had conventional reef points which were used like this: the first reef was taken upwards to the yard to avoid weighting the bottom of the sail. The same procedure happened with subsequent reefs, as large rolls of canvas accumulate heavily at the bottom of a squaresail and inhibit a natural belly forming in it.

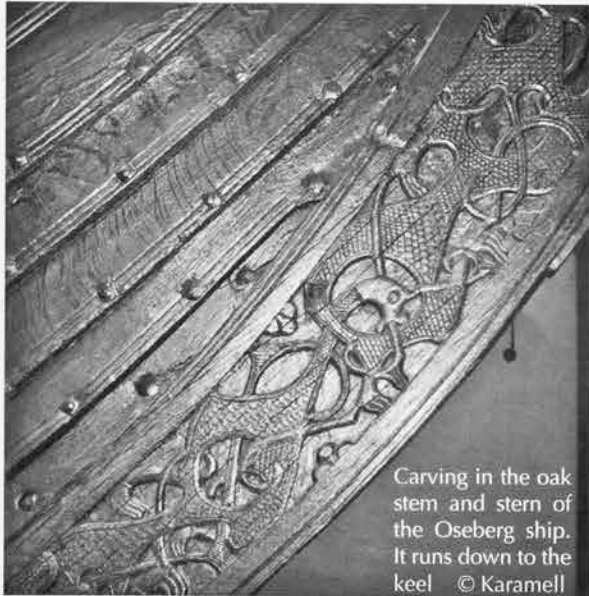
The Rodel carver's understanding of sails and ropes is nowhere better shown than in his tying of the yard braces well inboard from the outer ends of the yard. This reflects the need to be able to tame it as it is dropped down the mast with the sail still fully under control even at the lowest point, because the outward angle of the braces will then be nowhere near as acute as it would be if they were attached to the outer tips of the spar, right out over the water. Tying them further inboard indicates a sure knowledge of squaresail use. I'm sure Alasdair Crotach took time to explain this point to his stonemason — but he would already have known it.

The stemhead and sternpost are notched, possibly to take elaborate figureheads that could be removed for safety when in harbour. It is also possible that we are looking at crutches in side elevation, which would mean that they could take a spar to drape the sail over to form a tent. Norse boats often had supports like tall trestles on board that took oars over which the sail was draped to form a shelter. Some historians have said that the birlinn's mast would have been laid from stempost to sternpost to achieve this, but that makes no sense at all: the mast was very big, very heavy and had rigging in



place, carefully set up and stretched. The mast would also have been too short to span the length of the boat. A Viking rule of thumb was for it to be only as long as the boat's full girth, measured in way of the mast step, or the broadest beam.

Surely the yard would have been used as a tent ridgepole from mast to sternpost, covering just half the length of the deck, which would have been sufficient. It is also feasible to suggest that the sail could have been left bent onto the yard, and when unfurled and the yard in place, would allow sufficient area of material to be doubled down to one gunwale (or the deck)



Carving in the oak stem and stern of the Oseberg ship. It runs down to the keel © Karamell

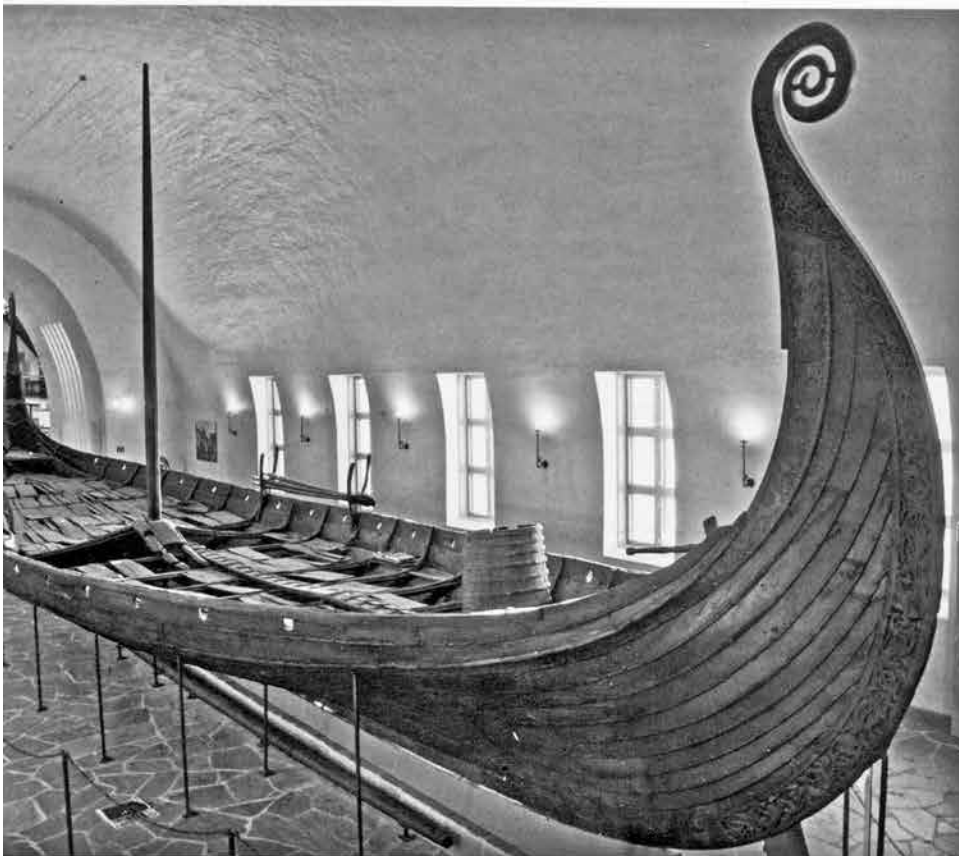
then brought back over the spar to reach the opposite gunwale (or the deck), so producing a 'tent' in very little time, with one eave double thickness.

In May 1991 Wallace Clark had the pleasure of seeing a birlinn floating below him in a bay in Western Ireland. He had dreamed about it eleven years previously and then had overseen her being built. Now it was a floating reality. *Aileach* is a sixteen-oar birlinn. Clark decided to call her a 16-oar galley when he wrote his book, '...as the public wouldn't know what a birlinn was.'

The Privy Council Meeting of 1615 had arbitrarily decreed that a galley was a vessel of 18-24 oars, and a birlinn carried 12-18 oars, mainly so those present had a handy reference to visualise the sizes of boats they were commandeering for the king's use, and the galleys belonging to rebels that James VI wanted destroyed. Be that as it may, *Aileach* qualifies easily as one of the type with her 16 oars, even more so as her design was closely based on the Rodel birlinn of Alasdair Crotach.

Clark secured the help of Colin Mudie to draw up the plans. There was no other sailing man with a wider range of projects and designs to his name. And this was not Mudie's only galley: he had been involved with Tim Severin in his retracing of the voyages of legendary figures, starting with the first sea adventure, The Brendan Voyage, and then Colin drew the plans for *Argo* in preparation for rowing the 1,500 miles of the *Jason Voyage*.

'The construction of a replica invokes strong passions, and we had some acidic letters about methods and materials from purists who wanted us to use green timber and iron rivets. Colin replied to all with more sweet reason than I could have mustered,' Wallace Clark has written.



### The Oseberg Ship

Is a 70.8ft long (21.58m), 16.7ft, (5.10m) wide vessel. It is the oldest known Viking longship as well as the best-preserved, giving historians an unparalleled insight into 9th-century Viking life.

Although buried for over a millennium, the blue clay and turf under which the ship lay helped to preserve the wood.

The ship is a Karve / Carbh, a small type of Viking longship, and is made almost entirely of oak. It could be sailed or rowed. With 15 pairs of oar ports, up to 30 men could row the ship, achieving a maximum of speed of around 10 knots (11.5 mph). It was probably built earlier than 800AD, so she is around 1,220 years old

© Peter Ulleland

(Colin had decided to make the stem and stern posts with 14 laminations of oak, each one an inch thick, in the interests of structural stability.)

The word *Aileach* strictly means 'rocky', but it was also the name of a Scottish princess from Kintyre who married an Irish prince, Eochaid in AD400. He built a castle for her so strong and beautiful that it stands to this day. They began the family line that led to Somerled and so to Clan MacDonald, and then by marriage to the line of the O'Malleys that included Grace O'Malley, famous commander of galleys and the receiver of a pardon from Elizabeth I, after a face-to-face meeting characterised by mutual respect. A drawing of Grace with her chin stuck out, broadsword in hand, is on *Aileach's* linen squaresail.

Wallace Clark's book is *The Lord of the Isles Voyage*, but it actually describes two major cruises in *Aileach*. Their first prolonged adventure, Ireland to Scotland, followed the coast of NE Ireland, slipping past Clare Island, around Achill Island and on to Rathlin Island, Ballycastle and Red Bay, before crossing over to leave the Mull of Kintyre to starboard, then up the Sound of Islay and on to Colonsay, Iona, and northwards, ultimately to Stornoway in Lewis. That was in 1991.

In June 1992 they undertook the 'Faroes Voyage'. *Aileach* left Moidart, passed up the Sound of Sleat, crossed from Badachro to Lewis, then had her rudder destroyed many miles due west of Sule Skerry and was helped into Stromness in the Orkneys. Rudder replaced, then off for 200 miles NNW, passing Sule Skerry and on to Suðuroy then Torshavn in the Faroes. The return trip was one epic due-south leg from Torshavn to Badachro in Scotland, leaving North Rona to starboard. They encountered a wide range of weather and sea conditions, and suffered two major breakages. They coped magnificently in all circumstances.

The book is full of dramatic sailing, good humour, malt whisky and entertaining detail on people past and present, together with musings on galley construction and cruising. And, since you're asking, she rows at 4 knots top speed, 3 knots average and attains up to 14k running off under sail, when she is tamed over Force 7 by towing a canvas sea anchor. On both major cruises she logged a respectable daily average of 75 miles. *KM*



(Above) Moored off Tarbert, Loch Nevis

(Below) Passing between Priest Rocks

and Achill Head to dodge the tide

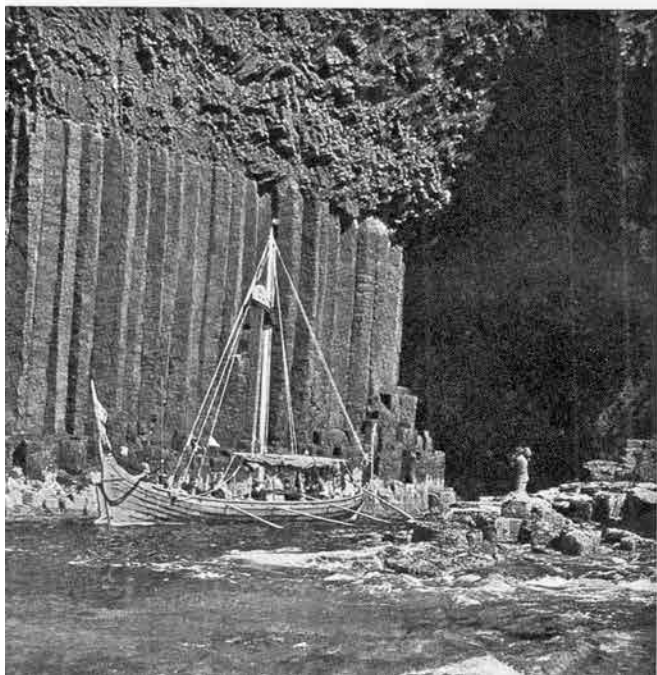
(Below left) *Aileach* entering

Fingal's Cave, Staffa

***Aileach*: Dimensions**

LOA (Hull)	39ft 9ins
LWL	35ft 6ins
Beam	10ft
Draught	2ft
Sail Area	360 ft <sup>2</sup> Oars: 16ft, ratio 4:1

*Grace O'Malley*





# Meandering the Texas Coast

## I'm 73 Today

I'm 73 today and Linda, my wife, went sailing with me this afternoon. It was a nice day on the water. A few hours spent looking for dolphins. They showed but were always too quick for the camera.

My son and his wife came over for dinner. Before they showed I showed my wife another small sailboat just up the coast near Houston. She didn't have a problem with my running off and buying it. She trusts me. I've an older one of the same model sitting in the yard, getting a remodel done on her. I've a new sail coming from Hong Kong for it, should be here in a couple of weeks.

The new possibility or stay with the old beater, the question of the evening? I'm leaning very hard towards the beater, I'm pretty far along in her rework. I know I wouldn't leave well enough alone if another beauty showed up.

*Ned* left last week, he's already unrecognizable. Such is life. I eyeballed a 14' Hobie Cat over in Corpus earlier in the morning, it wasn't hard to walk away from.

*Red Top's* mast extension should be done soon, maybe I'll wait until the new sail for him is ready, that'll push progress along. With the Hong Kong sail due within ten days or so the push will be to get the forward cockpit finished, more glass added as well. I can get that done and still sail *Red Top* in the afternoons.

Squeezing household chores into the mix at the same time brings with it memo-

By Michael Beebe

ries of doing this very thing all my life, juggling jobs, honey dos and wanna dos, mine. I look back at this retirement thing and see the busyness of it all. I wonder how I ever accomplished anything when working five or six days a week. Amazing.

## Potential

I don't normally give names to my small sailboats. I've never been one to do such. *Red Top*, my 12' Lehman sailing dinghy, was christened such only because when talking of the six or more boats in the back yard as they came and went, the Lehman 12 was referred to the one with the red top, it stuck.

My little dog Timmy, a real dog, not a boat that sails like a dog. I refer to him at times as High Hopes. He's called High Hopes when he hangs around the dinner table hoping for treats. He has to earn his treats, as when I tell him, "The Feds are coming," and he scurries under the end table hiding and waiting for the command to come out, "They're gone!" And out he comes for his treat.

So there's a new sailboat in the backyard over to the shop. An X20. It's not a Yamaha type nor a classy racer, the X is for Explorer 20. Right up my alley. The MacGregor 26 was just too much for these old bones.

The picture shows how it sits on its trailer waiting for a deep, deep cleaning. We

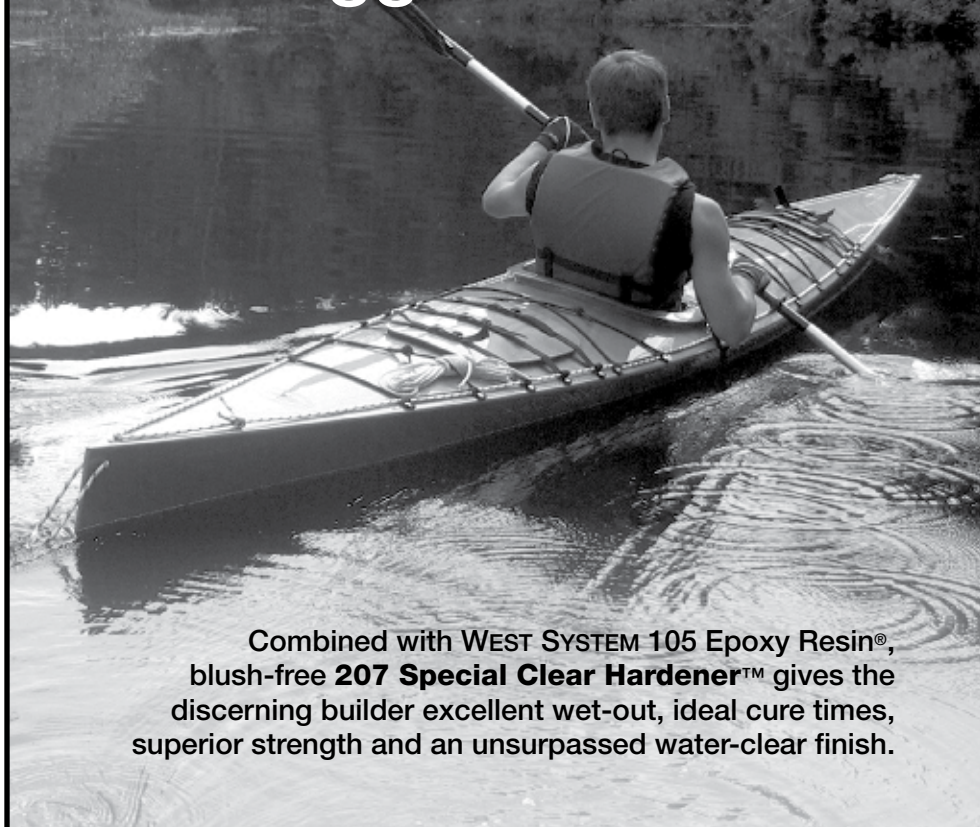
all know there are no free boats. This being one, the receipts are piling up as I write. A friend went with me to ride in his truck behind me in my truck pulling *Potential*. No flashing lights drawing attention. As if 15 in a 40 zone in front of Walmart wouldn't do that very thing. The wheel had a wobble in it, left side on the trailer, hence the slow. We made it though.

*Potential* came from having taken a picture of it at the shop. Showing my wife I said, "Potential!" There ya have it, but I know that won't stick, neither will High Hopes. If this new to me gets named it'll be along the lines of *Red Top* and I haven't a clue where that would come from.

"Maybe *Keeper*," my wife says. I'd like to think this boat will hang around that long, kind of like the dog earning his treats. Just how long does a boat have to stay to earn the name of *Keeper*? Time will tell.



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"We are observers, Mr. Jones... merely passing through history. Ah, but the Ark...the Ark is history."

- Belloch to Indy: From *Raiders of the Lost Ark*

"Mr. Conway, this is Richard Earle, the Westport harbormaster, and I'm afraid we've got a problem."

Judeo-Christian genetics force me to believe that phone calls after 10 PM usually mean that someone or something has died.

"Problem?" I croaked.

Earle continued, "We noticed your catboat riding pretty low at her mooring earlier today and thought we'd keep an eye on her. After some supper, I took another look and saw that she was awash nearly to the coaming. I had to act fast 'cause I knew she was going down."

My heart felt like a tube of toothpaste in the grip of a small child.

"Luckily we got a pump into the old bucket...the pump that hauls 200 gallons a minute...and saved her. Took the better part of a half hour at full bore. Gawd, those cats know how to hold their water."

Talcum-mouthed I groaned, "What should I do?"

"Well," Earle paused. "It's your call, but I'd say you should come down right away. She doesn't seem to be shipping any sea at the moment...but you never know."

"Thanks," I squeaked. "I'll come right away."

Right away, in this case, meant tomorrow morning. Westport, Massachusetts is a good four-and-a-half hours drive from my winter home in Summit, New Jersey, and it had already been a long day well before the harbormaster's call. I wouldn't do myself or the *Buckrammer* any good racing up there without sleep, no matter how unsettled that sleep might be.

My mind reeled. What had gone wrong?

Just a few weeks before, *Buckrammer*, my 1908 vintage Charles Crosby catboat, had been stripped of cargo and gear for the winter. She awaited a November 8 hauling, only five days from now. At last sight she sat comfortably unburdened on good old town mooring No. 8, just off of the public dock.

Had she sprung a plank? Been holed by some reckless dolt? Vandalized? She did have a minor centerboard trunk leak, but that only amounted to less than a gallon a day. Her pumps, two automatic jobs backed up by three diesel-sized marine batteries, should have easily handled the load. Hell, they had handled this all summer like cake. What the heck had happened?

The night could not have passed more slowly. Wide awake by 5 AM, I dressed, packed the car with all of the tools I could think to bring and hit the road.

Would the remarkably wonderful '93 season end on the bottom of the Westport River? The 300-mile drive provided the space to ponder a lifetime of events that now had me racing north on Route 95 this cold, November Thursday.

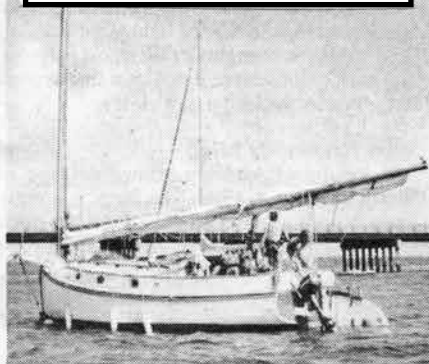
#### A Lifetime in (Little) Boats

Small boats and tales of small boats have been a part of my family as long as I can remember. My maternal grandfather would often tuck me in at night as a child with a story or two of his misadventures off of Galway Bay

## The Family, Me and the Catboat The Adventure Begins

By John E. Conway

### 25 Years Ago in **MAIB**



*Buckrammer* in happier times... Was she now on the bottom?

with his father and the Green family carrack "fleet."

"...and just as we finished lunch, the land began to move. God only knows how we managed to spring into the boat and haul up the anchor before the whale, that we thought was a small island, dove to the ocean floor. Me pa said 'twas our campfire what's spooked him.'"

My father grew up in a house right on Stony Beach, Hull, Massachusetts, on the southern approach to Boston Harbor and near the infamous Minot's Ledge. The Conway brothers and sisters can still recite dad's numerous tales as a teenage lobsterman in command of a flat-bottomed skiff powered by a cantankerous one-lunger. He was often accompanied by the legendary Captain Hatch, an octogenerian former Hull lifesaver who almost single-handedly rescued the captain and crew of the five-masted schooner *Nancy* when she grounded on Nantasket Beach in the Great February Gale of 1927. The melding of Captain Conway's and Captain Hatch's real and imagined adventures produced some amazing epics.

Little wonder then that dad thought it proper for my two brothers and I to master our own vessel by the time I, as oldest of the lot, had turned ten.

Bought from her builder, a part-time shipwright who worked out of his service station in Stoughton, Massachusetts, our 8', bronze-fastened, plywood wonder delivered Queen Mary-sized fun for many, many summers. My love for rowing with open-horned rowlocks (the only kind that 'Cap Hatch would allow) traces its roots to this little, no-named pram.

When Santa brought a Sears 3 hp outboard for the *No-Name*, we thought that we had truly died and gone to heaven. For over eight years we explored the tidal waters of West Dennis, Massachusetts...from the Bass

River to the Swan Pond River...in that wonderful rig.

High school brought larger aspirations. These materialized in the form of *Triton*, a battle-scarred Amesbury skiff, purchased from the Milton Yacht Club's (Milton, Massachusetts) Commodore George Klages for the princely sum of \$35. A '56 vintage, 25 hp Evinrude, acquired for \$100 from Gad-About Gaddis (TV's Flying Fisherman) rounded out the package.

*Triton* was put to immediate commercial use as the tender for the Conway brothers' latest brainchild, *Diventurers, Ltd.*, a scuba-divers-for-hire operation. That amazingly resilient Amesbury helped us collect more golf balls from water hazards and clean more sailboat hulls (and wallets) than you could possibly imagine. The old education fund looked pretty decent after a fashion.

By the time college loomed, I had discovered the United States Government's Surplus Sales Operation, otherwise known as "Uncle Sam's boat (and everything else) auction department." A chance sealed bid of \$327.50, my non-education fund life's savings at the time, won me a diesel powered, fiberglass, 26' motor whale boat in running condition. Hauling her from the submarine base in New London to my folk's new summer place on Onset Island in Wareham, Massachusetts took a \$300 loan from my sympathetic parents. (It was a boat, after all.)

From her ultimate base at the Milton Yacht Club on the Neponset River, the *Diversions* would provide a remarkable ten-year education in everything from seamanship to diesel engine maintenance and repair. (Our childhood *No-Name* pram and the *Triton* both served as *Diversions*' tenders. The Conways almost never abandon their salty craft once possessed.) This little navy gig was remarkably seaworthy but equally unsprayworthy. Our first log entry, a little ditty fashioned after Gilbert & Sullivan, reads:

"Here's to the whaleboat *Diversions*,  
She'll handle the wildest blow,  
After her crew take an outing, They're covered with salt, head to toe."

With college completed, the ultimate adventures of entering the workforce, marriage, and children squeeze boating more and more into life's bilges. It would be almost 12 years before time, tide and fortune would re-ignite the flame.

#### Westport On the Run

"We don't get much call for marine batteries this time of year," the Sears sales clerk said doubtfully. "But I'll see what I can find down in the cellar."

My gut-wrenching drive from New Jersey to Westport had almost ended. Figuring that submersion had probably ruined the *Buckrammer*'s marine batteries, I felt it prudent to pick up a spare for the pumps. I hadn't counted on the change of seasons to mess up the plan. No matter, I'd just buy an auto battery and a carrying strap if worse came to worse.

"You lucked out, bud," the salesman clucked as he dropped 40 pounds of power on the countertop. "Last one in the larger and she's all set to go."

The trip from Sears to the Point would take less than 30 minutes.

The plan was simple:

First, drive down to the Horseneck Beach



*No-Name*, our plywood pram had lasted several generations.

Bridge. *Buckrammer* would be clearly visible from that vantage point either as a floating example of a Cape Cod catboat or as a mast truck sticking out of the river marking a catboat shipwreck.

Second; assuming the "old bucket" was still afloat, drive back to the dock where *Buckrammer's* tender was secured, climb in and ship out.

Third; row over to *Buckrammer*, secure the tender, go aboard and inspect the damage.

Fourth; make up the rest as I went along.

Route 88 is a straight shot from civilization to the perpetually frozen past of historic Westport Point. Normally a drive south on this road has an almost magical transforming effect as you journey from the world of Internets and microchips to that of fishing nets and oil lamps. Maybe thoughts of Westport summers would help loosen the belly knot that seemed to tighten as the bridge got closer.

#### Westport On My Mind

We purchased a summer cottage on Westport Point in 1989. The Point is a registered historical village where time has come to a standstill somewhere in the 1920's. An

honest-to-goodness general store, a one-person post office, a "doesn't get any fresher" fish market and a working fishing dock share Main Street with numerous building and homes, many of which date back into the 1700's.

Our cottage, exposed to water on one side, sits in the middle of this Currier and Ives scene. Back in 1989, all that our new/old little house lacked was a boat. With dock space generously offered by my spouse's family, this would soon be remedied. The chosen craft turned out to be an 8' wooden sailing pram.

*Splinter* was built from a remarkable kit known as the Frog and sold by Merriman Boats of Lansing, Michigan. A clever jig system, coupled with the latest in epoxy construction, allows virtually anyone to build one of these lap-strake, sprit-sail-rigged sailing dinghies in a leisurely two or three weekends. Merriman even throws in all of the tools (includes screwdriver, saw and awl).

My three kids, their eight cousins and about a dozen neighborhood children all took a turn slathering glue, paint and varnish during the construction phase. In return, *Splinter* became one of the first wooden boats built on the Point since the whaling ship *Kate Cory* slid the ways in the 1800's. She is a perpetual part of summer for our Westport seasonal "turn-ups."

*Splinter* activated or reactivated the dreaded boating virus BIG TIME for the Conway clan (especially yours truly). Rowing abilities were developed or rediscovered. Sailing skills were learned and honed. (Nothing sharpens sailing skills more than tacking a sprit-sail pram against the current of the Westport River. You either learn to squeeze every fractional knot out of the wind or end up heading out to sea on a two knot ebb.) Sea legs (OK, marsh and river legs) were strengthened. Valuable experience, caution, confidence and sea sense were accumulated and filed away for later use.

Unfortunately, the *Splinter* seemed to shrink in size with each passing year. Before long it was difficult to believe that our family of five had ever been able to sail and picnic together in the little boat. The twitch to secure a bigger boat became almost unbearable.

One spring weekend, as my wife and I prepared the cottage for the summer ahead, our neighbor and sailor extraordinaire Dr. Kelly stopped by for a gam.

"Hey John," Kelly teased, "Did you see the ad for a Beetle Cat on the bulletin board at Lee's Market? You might be able to move up the boating food chain for a reasonable price."

I hadn't seen the ad but in less than an hour my wife and I were on our way to inspect *Hep Cat*, a 1963 vintage Beetle.

It was hard for me to imagine that I might actually own an authentic Beetle Cat. As a child spending summers on the Cape in West Dennis, I had always seen these wonderful, gaff-rigged beauties skimming along on what, at times, seemed like vapor deep water. With only one huge sail and a single "string" mainsheet, the little vessel exuded class and charm. Unfortunately, the cost of membership in Beetle-dom always seemed just beyond reach. Hell, my diesel whaleboat, *Diversion*, cost less than a Beetle Cat sail.

*Hep Cat* sat on the wreckage of a homemade trailer looking for all the world like a July bonfire waiting for a match. Every galvanized screw had long ago turned to dust. Most of her ribs had split crosswise and, in



*Triton* and her *Diventurer's Ltd.* crew.

*Diversion* supported numerous underwater expeditions.







*Splinter* originally came as a vessel of many parts.

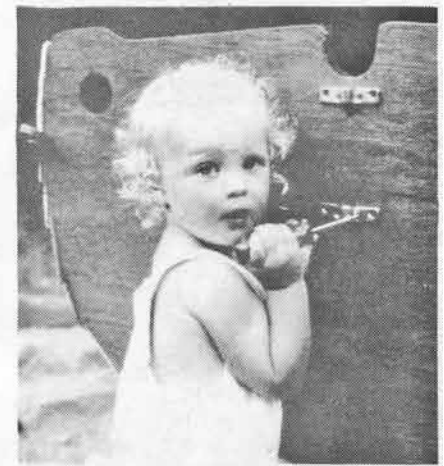


Everyone took a turn slathering glue and helping out.



A clever jig system allowed easy assembly.

Literally overnight, *Splinter* began to take shape.



Caroline served as *Splinter's* gudgeonmaster.

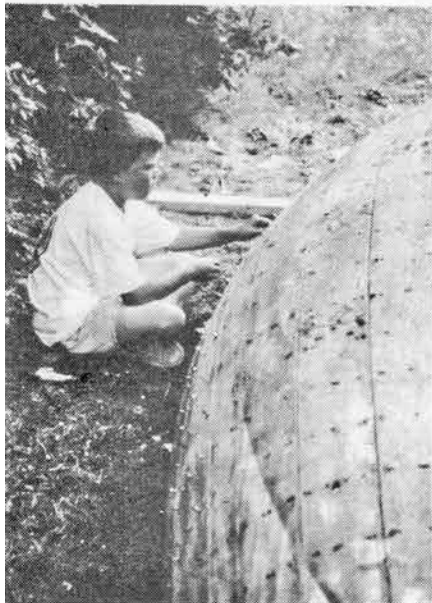
Abby, Ned and Caroline and *Splinter* inspect the clam flats.







Paint and good intentions held *Hep Cat* together when we bought her.



Ned inserts one of the 1248 screws that went into *Driftwood*.

#### Resources Mentioned in TFMATC

1. U.S. Government Surplus Sales Contact: Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service National Sales Office, P.O. Box 5275 DDRC, 2163 Airways Blvd., Memphis, TN 381145210, phone 800-222-DRMS. Ask for the booklet: *How to Buy Surplus Properly*

2. Horseneck Beach State Park, Route 88, Westport, MA 02791. Open April through October.

3. Merriman Boats, 4915 Delta River Rd., Lansing, MI 48906, phone 517-482-9333, fax 517-323-0132

4. Beetle, Inc., Charles Smith, Proprietor, 313 Smith Neck Rd., S. Dartmouth, MA 02748, phone 508-996-9971.

5. International Manne Publishers, The McGraw-Hill Companies, P.O. Box 182607, Columbus, OH 43218-2607, phone 800-822-8158, fax 614-759-3644.

6. Sika Corporation, 22211 Telegraph Rd., Southfield, MI 48034, phone 810-354-6555.

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some cases, lengthwise. A few planks were sprung out at angles that even Phil Bolger would find hard to design in. I felt what Joshua Slocum must have experienced as he first examined *Spray* pushing up daisies in her field on Poverty Point in Fairhaven.

However...

*Hep Cat's* sail, spars and rigging, having been stored indoors, were in excellent shape. The deck canvas, often a cracked or torn weak spot on a Beetle, was in pristine condition. The coaming was secure and the keel, skeg, rudder and centerboard seemed solid and true.

Her owner puffed on his pipe and hovered about us as we inspected the vessel.

"She won the Labor Day race last year, you know," he boasted.

The 12+ foot Beetles are always raced with two people aboard, a skipper and a mate. I remember wondering who the poor bugger of a mate was in that last race. He or she must have bailing bucket muscles like those of Schwarzenegger.

"We'll take her", I offered.

The Conways never saw a \$400 antique wooden boat they didn't like. *Hep Cat's* transformation totally consumed about six calendar weeks over June and July. Thanks to the availability of parts from the Beetle Cat Company in Padanarum, Massachusetts, we were able to replace most of the broken stuff in short order. Along the way I picked up a skill I had only read about...the art of steam bending white oak.

After studying countless steam box designs from sources as ancient as old bound copies of *Motorboating* and *The Rudder* to the state-of-the-art guidance of *MAIB* and *Wooden Boat Magazine*, we settled on our own version of the thing. The steam chamber consisted of a length of schedule-80 PVC plumbing pipe. The boiler was a metal gas can. A length of automobile hot water hose mated on one end to a fitting inserted into the PVC pipe. The other end connected to the flexible spout on the gas can. My white gas Wisperlite backpacking stove provided the source of heat.

In operation, we would boil up a gas can full of water on the kitchen stove. Once the boiling started, we would rush the can outside and place it atop of the Wisperlite and connect the heater hose. The camp stove would maintain the boiling point and steam would pour out into the steam box/pipe.

The kindly folks at the Beetle Company told me to cook the oak ribs for one hour at full steam (old rule of thumb, one hour for each 3/4" of thickness). At first I figured that if one hour was good enough; then two hours would be better. Several cracked ribs later I appreciated the windowy nature of the steaming art. Too little steam and the unsoftened natural lignum "glue" keeps the stick from bending. Too much steam and the lignum evaporates while the stick gets crisped. Properly steamed, the ribs went in like butter (well, cold butter).

Along with new ribs came the task of re-fastening. First we had to ream out the old rusty, dusty screws. Most of these came out in a puff of iron oxide smoke. However, some of the little devils still had their screwy bite. These came along on the business end of my needle-nosed pliers. The empty screw holes were further cleaned out with an ingenious, homebrewed wire brush widget made for use in an electric drill and described in the excellent book *The Boatwright's Companion* by Allen Taube (International Marine Publishers).

Over 1248 (counted 'em myself) slightly oversized stainless steel screws went back into the holes to keep the planks from falling off (a good idea in a boat).

Sikaflex caulking adhesive was used to keep things watertight yet flexible. I had read in *Wooden Boat* about the Quick and Dirty boatbuilding contest wherein the contestants need to build a functional boat from a few 2' x 4's, some plywood and all the Sikaflex they want. From the success stories of this contest, I figured if the screws ever let go, the Sikaflex alone would probably hold the whole boat together. Hmmm.

Slowly *Hep Cat* morphed into *Driftwood*...a name derived from my daughter's expressed opinion of the boat when she first saw it. The rebuilt and freshly painted *Driftwood* hit the water early in August and our love affair with catboats began.

Now, as the *Horseneck Bridge* approached, fate was potentially about to change this love affair in a big way!

To Be Continued

Oars at the ready, *Driftwood* awaits the tide.



### Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico

The Coast Guard cutter *Heriberto Hernandez*'s Over-the-Horizon IV cutter boat rendered assistance to the disabled sailing vessel *Wahu* approximately nine nautical miles west of Cabo Rojo. It later terminated the voyage following a search and rescue boarding which revealed multiple safety violations. Then *Wahu* was transiting with two people aboard from Florida to Barbados when it reportedly became disabled. Once the operator of the *Wahu* completes repairs and corrects the cited violations, the vessel will be able to resume its voyage.



### Miami, Florida

A deployed Air Station Clearwater MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter rescue crew assisted Turks and Caicos police and marine units in finding 159 people approximately 13 miles east of west Caicos Island, Turks and Caicos.

While aircrew remained on scene TC1 responders removed all the people from the sail freighter and brought them to safety. The sail freighter ran aground on a reef. Additionally, due to the migrant vessel being significantly overloaded, the air crew searched the immediate area to ensure no people were sighted in the water.



### St Petersburg, Florida

The Coast Guard Cutter *Shrike* crew towed a disabled 41' pleasure craft with three people aboard 70 miles southwest of Marco Island. Coast Guard Sector St Petersburg received a VHF Channel 16 call from the disabled pleasure craft operator stating that they were experiencing electrical problems. The *Shrike*, an 87' Coastal Patrol Boat, arrived to make an assessment of the situation and develop a plan with the vessel operator. After 70 miles of towing, the *Shrike* crew transferred the pleasure craft to an awaiting Coast Guard Station Fort Myers Beach 45' Response Boat crew near Fort Myers Beach sea buoy for final transit to Manatee Pier.



## Our Coast Guard in Action

### Key West, Florida

Coast Guard rescue crews assisted the 40' fishing vessel *Santa Maria* approximately 80 miles southwest of Key West. The crew of the *Santa Maria* had launched two flares and a nearby good Samaritan saw the flares and reported to Coast Guard Sector Key West watchstanders the *Santa Maria* crew's distress. The good Samaritan stayed within radar contact of the vessel until Coast Guard crews arrived on the scene.

A HC-144 Ocean Sentry airplane crew arrived on scene first and established communication with the *Santa Maria*'s crew. They reported the vessel was taking on water and had a steering casualty. The fishing crew repaired the issues and was heading to Conch Harbor Marina.

The aircrew stayed on the scene until Coast Guard cutter *Richard Etheridge* arrived. They escorted the vessel as far as the Key West sea buoy when a Station Key West crew then took over the escort back to the marina.



### Fort Pierce, Florida

The Coast Guard assisted seven people after their vessels collided and began taking on water approximately 13 miles east of Fort Pierce. The boat crew embarked the seven individuals and safely transported them to Station Fort Pierce. Coast Guard watchstanders had received a report of the vessel collision from a good Samaritan.



### Wilmington, North Carolina

Coast Guard response crews and a good Samaritan rescued a man from his sunken fishing vessel approximately 20 miles southwest of Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. The man was rescued wearing a life jacket in 46° water.

Watchstanders at Coast Guard Sector North Carolina received the initial report from the father-in-law of the man whose 18' boat sank at the mouth of Alligator River near East Lake. At the time of the call the man was on the bow of his sunken vessel.

Coast Guard crews were launched aboard a 29' Response Boat-Small from Station Elizabeth City and an MH-60 Jayhawk from Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City. The aircrew directed a nearby good Samaritan vessel to the location of the sunken boat. The vessel's crew were able to bring the man aboard and transfer him to EMS waiting at the Alligator River marina.

"This is one of those situations that could have deteriorated quickly," said Senior Chief Greg Slusher, Command Duty Officer. "No one leaves the marina expecting their boat to sink. Thankfully this man equipped himself with a lifejacket and a way to call for help. Being unprepared in water this cold can turn a dangerous situation to a deadly one very quickly."

### Miami, Florida

Palm Beach Sheriff officers requested Coast Guard Station Lake Worth Inlet assistance Tuesday after boarding the 41' vessel *Ace in the Hole* near New Port Cove Marina. The Sheriff officers took the operator into custody for a prior arrest warrant. Station Lake Worth Inlet's law enforcement team found a small amount of marijuana, a loaded gun and signs of potential underage drinking. The contraband was taken into custody and transferred to Coast Guard Investigative Service agents.

The law enforcement team determined the vessel was operating as an illegal small passenger vessel. There were 21 people aboard, 20 passengers for hire and one operator. There were only nine life jackets. Passengers reported paying \$800 for a six hour charter.

The voyage was terminated and cited for the following violations:

- Failure for not having a valid Certificate of Inspection.

- Failure to have a valid Certificate of Documentation endorsed for Coastwise Trade.

- Failure to have a drug and alcohol program.

- Failure to have a credentialed mariner in control while operating as a small passenger vessel.

- Failure to employ an appropriately credentialed mariner.

- Failure to have Type 1 personal flotation devices for all persons aboard.

"It is incredibly irresponsible as an operator to have 21 occupants on a vessel with only nine life jackets," said Petty Officer 1st Class Nicole J. Groll, public affairs specialist, Seventh District. "The operator is putting lives at risk without having the basic lifesaving equipment."

"These boardings are not going to stop," said Coast Guard Sector Miami Investigations Officer, Lt. j.g. Danny Hicks. "Our partner law enforcement officers and Coast Guard law enforcement teams will make sure charters are operating legally under state and federal law, and everyone is safe on the water."



### Alameda, California

The Coast Guard rescued two people after their boat capsized approximately two miles from Moss Landing. Coast Guard Sector San Francisco received a mayday broadcast stating their boat capsized approximately two miles off Moss Landing. Watchstanders dispatched a Coast Guard Station Monterey 47' Response Boat-Medium crew to assist and diverted a Coast Guard Air Station San Francisco MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew to search the area. The Station Monterey boat crew arrived on scene and rescued the persons, transferring them to emergency medical services at Moss Landing with minor concerns reported for hypothermia.



### Eureka, California

The Coast Guard rescued three people after their commercial crab fishing boat lost propulsion and collided with the jetties while attempting to transit through the entrance channel in Humboldt Bay. Coast Guard Sector Humboldt Bay watchstanders received a distress call on VHF-FM channel 16 from the fishing vessel *Sunup* stating their vessel had propulsion problems and was on the south jetty rocks inside the channel.

Watchstanders dispatched a Coast Guard Station Humboldt Bay 47' Motor Life Boat crew and a Sector Humboldt Bay MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew. The MLB crew arrived on scene finding the *Sunup* mostly underwater. The crew retrieved two of the fishermen directly from the sinking boat and pulled the third fisherman from the water.

The use of VHF-FM Channel 16 and an emergency position indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) allowed Sector Humboldt Bay watchstanders to quickly receive the crew's distress call and pinpoint their location.

"The situation became grave when the third fisherman fell into the water with the other two clinging to the sinking vessel," said Petty Officer 1st Class Ruben Colon, the rescue boat coxswain. "Without a doubt, staying with their vessel until the last minute enabled us to quickly find and rescue them."



### Seattle, Washington

The Coast Guard and partner agencies suspended search efforts for a missing mariner in Lake Washington. A Formula One jet boat was found bumping against a dock near Juanita Bay, the engine was running in neutral with a cell phone and wallet onboard. Watchstanders at Sector Puget Sound received notification from Kirkland Fire Dispatch that a jet boat belonging to a missing person had been located. Sector Puget Sound command center immediately issued an urgent marine information broadcast and started search and rescue efforts after the report.

Video taken at Kenmore Marina confirmed that the vessel had launched that morning with one person aboard and reports from family confirmed that the person had intended to take the vessel from Kenmore to Blake Island.

Rescue crews completed 14 different search patterns and covered 55 square miles over 21.33 hours of searching. Crews and assets that assisted in the search:

Coast Guard Cutter *Osprey* and crew, an 87' patrol boat.

Station Seattle 45' Response Boat-Medium and crew.

Air Station Port Angeles MH-65 Dolphin rescue helicopter crew.

Kirkland Fire Department.

King County Sheriff's Office marine unit and crew.

Seattle Police Department marine unit and crew.

Mercer island marine unit and crew.

Good Samaritan vessel crews.

"Suspending search efforts is always an extremely difficult decision," said Randy Corbett, search and rescue mission coordinator, Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound. "The areas of concern were highly saturated by Coast Guard members and multiple partner agencies. Without locating the person or signs of distress, we have chosen to suspend the search, pending further developments."

### Seattle, Washington

The US Coast Guard and partner agencies suspended search for a missing pilot in the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The man took off in his Cessna 170A from Ketchikan, Alaska, with the intended destination of Port Angeles. A mayday call from the man was relayed to Coast Guard units in Seattle Sector Puget Sound command center which immediately started search and rescue efforts. Before the single engine airplane went down the pilot described land formations he could see and ships that were in the area. The Coast Guard built a search area based upon that information. Most of the area covered consisted of the waters north and northwest of Port Angeles up to the international boundary line.

Rescue crews completed 22 different search patterns and covered 1,170 square miles over the 23 hours of searching. Crews and assets that assisted in the search:

Coast Guard Cutter *Adelie* and crew, an 87' patrol boat.

Coast Guard Cutter *Terrapin* and crew, an 87' patrol boat.

Station Port Angeles 45' Response Boat-Medium and crew.

Air Station Port Angeles MH-65 Dolphin rescue helicopter crew.

HH-60 Blackhawk helicopter crew from U.S. Naval Air Station Whidbey Island.

Canadian Coast Guard cutter *Sir Wilfred Laurier* and crew.

Royal Canadian Air Force CC-115 Buffalo and crew.

Royal Canadian Air Force CH-149 Cormorant and crew.

Good Samaritan vessel crews.

A huge thanks to the many women and men from the Canadian Coast Guard, Royal Canadian Air Force, US Navy, US Coast Guard and good Samaritans who assisted in planning and carrying out this search effort.

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## White Fleet

The Norwegian Cruise Line is advertising heavily with sincere hopes that the post pandemic era will provide a significant uptick in the market by offering no less than a 30% coupon on ticket sales. Their highly colorful hulls are unmistakable and their destinations pretty much tell the story of cruising hot spots.

Virtually all of their 17 ships run between 145,000 to 168,00 tons with a passenger capacity of 4,000 and they all were built or totally refurbished within the last five years. Their Jewell-class ships are smaller and hold 2,000 plus passengers.



## Over the Horizon

By Stephen D.  
(Doc) Regan

### Gray Fleet

After I went all gushy about the *Independence*-class of LCS ships in the Navy, the Navy reported that the *Freedom*-class of

If ever there was an experience when trying to please everyone pleased no one, this is it. This is a perfect example of politics and engineering not mixing worth a darn. Oh, the late Senator John McCain has to be rolling in his grave. He fought this whole mess from day one.

As mentioned in previous Over The Horizon articles, the Navy has been very hot or very cold about the use of frigates. The proponents argue that they are inexpensive, multi functional and expendable. The opponents argue that they are cheap, easily expendable and easily sunk. Well, the Navy is again building frigates.

The *Constellation*-class frigate will be ready in about five years. Being built by Fincantieri, the first ship will be 496' in length with a beam of 64', her draft will be 18' (don't expect them to run up the Mississippi) and will generate 48,670hp. Their life expectancy is 25 years but don't bet on it. The Navy has pushed the life of ships well beyond the original plans. The frigate will be crewed by 200, 24 officers and 176 enlisted.



USS *Constellation* (Artist's Rendition)

Ship	Class	Destinations
<i>Bliss</i>	<i>Breakaway</i>	Pacific Coast, Caribbean, Panama Canal
<i>Breakaway</i>	<i>Breakaway</i>	" " " "
<i>Dawn</i>	<i>Dawn</i>	Caribbean, Northern Europe
<i>Encore</i>	<i>Breakaway</i>	Pacific Coast, Alaska, Mexico
<i>Epic</i>	<i>Epic</i>	Caribbean and Northern Europe
<i>Escape</i>	<i>Breakaway</i>	New England, Caribbean, No. Europe
<i>Gem</i>	<i>Jewel</i>	Caribbean, No. Europe, Med. Sea
<i>Getaway</i>	<i>Breakaway</i>	Caribbean, No. Europe
<i>Jade</i>	<i>Jewel</i>	Africa, Caribbean, No. Europe
<i>Jewel</i>	<i>Jewel</i>	Alaska, Hawaii, Pacific Coast
<i>Joy</i>	<i>Breakaway</i>	Alaska, Pacific Coast, Caribbean
<i>Pearl</i>	<i>Jewel</i>	Caribbean, New England, Med. Sea
<i>Sky</i>	<i>Sun</i>	Caribbean, Bahamas
<i>Spirit</i>	no class	Asia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand
<i>Star</i>	<i>Dawn</i>	Med. Sea, South America, No. Europe
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Sun</i>	Caribbean, Alaska
<i>Pride Of America</i> is a specialty ship plying among the Hawaiian Islands		

The *Pacific Princess*, the oldest of the liners owned by Princess Cruise lines, has been sold. Originally launched in 1999, she was getting long in the tooth for a ship that needs to cater to every need, whim and desire of a gluttonous public.

MCS is desperately looking for experienced crew in order to commence operations in July. Having dumped all crewmembers when the pandemic assaulted the industry, MCS now has the problem of finding crew to run their ships. This was a major concern when they pink slipped everyone. They hope that many of their former crew are available, but they are not holding their breath.

If you want to enter the cruise business now is the chance because many ships are for sale. Mystic Cruises' *Vasco Da Gama* that proffers luxury for 1,200 passengers can be yours for an excellent price of \$10 million. Of course, it probably needs a couple of million bucks to upgrade it and make it workable.

*Columbus*, a 62,000-ton ship owned by CMV but previously owned by several other companies since its 1988 birth, is on the selling block. It can handle 1,400 guests. Meanwhile, the 22,000-ton *Astor* that once was noted as a five star cruise ship, was sold for a piddly \$1 million. Carnival's famous *Magellan*'s age caught up with her. At 35 years of age, she pumped millions into the coffers of her owners but her high roller days are behind her and she was auctioned off for \$3.4 million. During the year the ancient *Marco Polo*, a stately matriarch built in 1965, was sent to the scrappers who bought her for over \$2 million.

Some of the sold ships will be rebuilt and refurbished for future operations and some will be junked. The thought of these once grand vessels being turned into razor blades is painful for all sailors.

the LCS needs significant revamping of the gearing system that links the Rolls Royce gas turbines to the Colt-Pielstick Diesel engines that is class wide. The *Freedom*-class ships also have major clutch bearing design flaws that Lockheed-Martin maintains it will permanently change.

For those of you who have forgotten, when the military asked for a design of a landing craft ship, two major companies presented two vastly different models, one that looks like all the rest of the fleet and one that is a trimaran using water jets to propel it. Politics intervened and BOTH models were accepted so that both companies could feed at the trough. The *Freedom* model has been plagued with disastrous problems since they came out of drydock construction. The *Independence* model also had major problems but they have been subsequently repaired.



USS *Freedom*



USS *Independence*

Her propulsion plant includes a gas turbine, two electric propulsion motors, four diesel generators and one auxiliary propulsion unit. She will carry the Aegis combat system and a hanger for MH-60 helicopters. Armed to the teeth, she will have 1 MK 110 57mm gun, 32 MK 41VLSs, 16 NSM weapon systems, 1 MK 49 RAM, 4 MK 53 MOD 9 DLSs and 2 AN-SLQ-32 (V)6CM (SEWIP) BLK II suites. For the mere mortals who read this, the Aegis system is a defense arrangement that can operate against land, sea and air attack simultaneously. The 57mm gun is that barrel sticking out of a metal shed in front of the ship. The VLS is a vertically launched missile, the RAM is an anti aircraft missile, DLS is a radar decoy weapon and the rest of it is beyond my understanding. Apparently the frigates will be able to counter air and sea attack and can shoot the heck out of anything within range.

Is Navy language taught at the Defense Language Institute? I don't remember it when I was there.

The State Historical Society of Iowa once asked me to write a history of the *USS Iowa* (BB-61), the largest battleship ever built by the US. The old girl has a modestly interesting history, including showing off for President Franklin Roosevelt with some "let's play war" games that suddenly became less of a game when a destroyer accidentally fired a torpedo at the ship carrying not only the President but the Chief of Naval Operation and many of FDR's closest advisors. Because *Iowa* was carrying the paraplegic President, the Navy installed a bathtub for his use. Anyway, I love the photos of BB-61 firing her majestic 16" guns.

The Navy has always wanted the biggest bang for the buck and they have spent years

working on two science fiction type weapons for the future. The first is a series of laser guns that is reminiscent of Sci-Fi movies' ray guns. These are touted as incredibly cost effective, can be fired as long as the ship has electricity and are deadly. They already possess several different Laser Weapons Systems (LaWS). The downside of these death rays is also their greatest strength, precision. The lasers burn through armor like it was cellophane. But you better know exactly where to aim it. You might be burning up the Enlisted Men's Head or the Jack-o'-the-Dust's flour pantry. Worse, if you miss the target the beam goes on and on and on out into space where it could strike satellites, space stations or hurt little green men on Mars.

The second major new weapon system is the Electro Magnetic Rail Gun (EMRG) that the defense contractors have been working on for over a decade. This entity can hurl a projectile at Mach 7.2 (ah, that's seven times the speed of sound!) at a rate of ten rounds per minute at a range of up to 110 miles. Obviously the projectile doesn't need to be large. At that speed and with that amount of energy the "bullet" (actually it is shaped more like a missile) will simply pass right through the target. The downside is fairly steep. It is very costly, it requires a huge amount of electricity and if it misses the target it could lethally hit anything in its path. Oops, we missed the target but we did destroy a cruise ship 100 miles further away.

### Merchant Fleet

The US Merchant Marine Academy is often overlooked by would be sailors who try to enter the Naval Academy. The MMA is at King's Point, New York, and hosts almost 1,000 students working on degrees in Marine Engineering, Shipyard Management, Engineering Systems, Marine Transportation (marine science and maritime management) and Logistics and Security. You end up with a wonderful degree, a Coast Guard certification and a military commission. Students will spend a "Sea Year" with over 300 days at sea working aboard a commercial, passenger or military vessel.

This is a great opportunity. For a commitment of six years, the student will earn a commission, a good paying job, lots of career prospects and it is compliments of Uncle Sam. Students do have to pay for haircuts and laundry fees. Out of approximately 1,200 applicants, 400 will actually walk in the front gates. The others either change their minds, fail medical exams or fail to meet academic standards. A 1200 SAT score is about what USMMA demands.

Obtaining a commission can also be accomplished via other academies including Cal State Marine Academy, Great Lakes Marine Academy, Maine Maritime Academy, SUNY Marine College, Massachusetts Maritime Academy and Texas A&M Maritime Academy. The big difference is that you have to pay tuition at these schools and it runs about \$30,000 per year for basic expenses. Great Lakes proffers certifications for Engineering Officers and Deck Officers. GLMM has lower entrance standards but looks to students with previous military service or already holding a Bachelor's degree. Mass Maritime offers several different degrees, including Social Science, but the cost is about the same as for most private colleges with the caveat that they do charge different costs for out of state students.

### Inland Waterways

2020 may have been an economical drag on many industries but it was good for some of the towboat builders who launched 38 new vessels. The new *Scarlet Rose Furlong* was the most powerful tug being able to generate 6,600 hp while *H. Merrit (Heavy) Lane, Jr.* and *Sandra Holt* came in at the 6,000hp range. Most of the rest of them were between 2,000hp and 3,000hp.

The Gulf Coast reeled under constant inundations of hurricanes. 2005 set the record for the most named tropical storms at 28, however, 2020 unleashed 30 named storms with 13 being true hurricanes. Astonishingly, five hammered Louisiana. Ships sank, docks were destroyed, the navigation channel was altered and, of course, there were warehouse and businesses blown to bits in the 150mph winds.

Kirby Inland Marine purchased an entire fleet of 31 vessels during the year and renamed all the boats. Evidently they bought out Savage Marine's tows so that Savage could center on their other operations and terminals. Kirby has the largest number of barges and tows in the nation and they operate over 26,000 miles of waterways. They have over 1,084 barges, 265 tows and can handle 24.5 million barrels of liquid. They own 22 fleet operations at 800 tow spots, clean barges and have their own shipyard.

Dubuque's Newt Drydocks spent the summer filled to capacity repowering four boats between January and March, a period when working on boats simply isn't fun in Iowa.

LST-325 (aka Long Slow Target) has scurried around the inland waterways as one of the few remaining LSTs in existence. The crew takes the boat along rivers and stops at assorted towns where, for an immodest fee, the public can walk around the innards of the beast that is basically a large metal box that hauls military equipment to shore. Being flat bottomed, an LST can run right up onto the shore, open its maw, discharge her cargo and simply back off. LST are known for their inability to sail without significant rolling and tremendous rocking. 'Tis not a place for those who get seasick easily.

LST-325's owners really wanted to find a permanent home because the cost of running her around sundry rivers was getting out of hand. They originally found a spot in Evansville, Indiana, but the lure of a casino took their location. As has happened around the country, the casino boat business was a flash in the pan and Tropicana Casino closed in 2017. Evansville built a \$3.6 million visitors center and warmly welcomed the old LST back to her dock.

*Waterways Journal* provided a list of tows lost, burned, sank or scrapped. The *City of Cleveland* was the only one that burned up to the point of no return. Nineteen of her sisters were simply scrapped. *Boone* and *R.C. Coppel* merely sank. *Ed McLaughlin* was dismantled and the rest of the list was unassumingly taken out of service to rusticate at some dock. It is always a sad scene to see a forlorn tow of large size sitting on a beach dying slowly of the elements. One such vessel sits in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, near one of my favorite restaurants. She is old and falling apart but she rests among a lot of recreational boats that are not only past their prime, they are past salvaging or restoring. Sad.

Reviewing some of Kirby Marine's data it is noted that the typical salary of a deckhand is \$37,800 on the average, a tanker-man can make about \$70,057 and a captain

makes a mean salary of \$123,409. It is quite a jump from the deck to the wheelhouse but the salary makes it worthwhile. On the other hand, the CEO makes a piddly \$4.7 million per annum and the underling Vice Presidents make about \$1.2 million. I was a born supervisor and would look good in the leather chair behind a vast mahogany desk.

The Inland Waterways workers are enthusiastic about President Joe Biden's proposals for infrastructure improvement including docking facilities, port improvements and cleaner energy. He isn't called Amtrack Joe for nothing. Senator Chuck Schumer is waxing eloquently over the "bold" agenda.

Jacques Cousteau made scientific history and television interesting when he shared so many experiences aboard his ship *Calypso*. Unfortunately the poor boat sank in a shipyard but was refloated after 17 days. The restoration cost became prohibitive and she was sold several times, including a stint with the Cousteau Society with the blessings of Jacques's grandchildren. Then the poor old former minesweeper caught on fire. "What isn't broken, is rotten," stated a spokesperson earlier this year. Sad.

The "palatial steamer *J.M. White*" was built for the cotton trade in 1878 at a cost of \$103,000. She was 320' long, 91' in width and boasted ten boilers running 43" cylinders with an 11' stroke. "No effort was spared to make the *J.M. White* the mightiest steamboat afloat and it was said to be an engineer's dreamboat, a pilot's paradise and a passenger's idea of supreme elegance."

In 1886 she was tied up with a load of 3,600 bales of cotton, 8,000 bags of seed, 400 barrels of oil and 40 passengers when she suddenly burst into flames. Powder stored in the hold exploded, sending timbers aloft. A clerk named Walsh Floyd lost his life saving as many as he could. Twenty-eight passengers died as did the world's largest ox, Otoe Chief, a gigantic animal weighing almost 4,000 lbs. Some relics from the boat survived and are housed in several riverine museums including chairs, silverware and a grand piano. When the river runs low sections of her can still be seen sticking out of the water.



The *J.M. White* before and after the fire.



## Two Views of the James Yard



This 1941 aerial view gives us a unique look at the James Shipyard, it looks much bigger from the air than it does in photos taken at street level. To give a sense of scale, the vessel on the ways is the 91' dragger *Ronald and Mary Jane*, launched in September of that year. Although it is a good sized dragger, it is less than half the length of *Vidette*, the largest vessel to be launched from this site and the largest Essex built vessel at 191' long.



The John F. James shipyard crew poses in front of a vessel in progress circa 1880. There are 24 shipbuilders in all but the number of workers in any shipyard could vary greatly day to day depending on what stage of the building process they were in and if there were any specialized workers (a planking gang or an inboard joiner, for example) in the yard.



## Frame Up Essex Shipbuilding Images from the Past

By Christopher Stepler  
Operations Administrator  
Essex Historical Society and Shipbuilding  
Museum (978) 768-17541

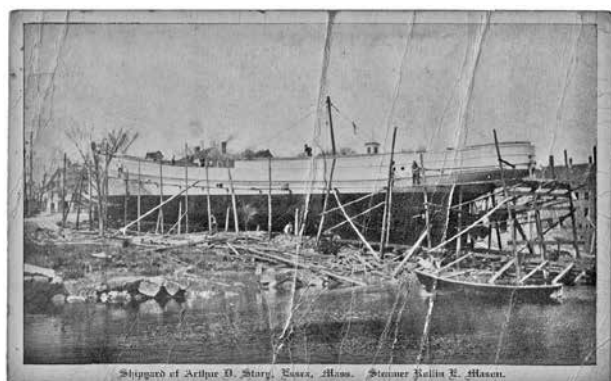


With a "Party Boat" sign on its smokestack, there's no doubt what business the *Lucy A.* (above) was in. With plenty of covered space, seating around the fantail (and what looks like a bench on top of the coach roof), there's plenty of space for revelers on board. The little steamboat was built by Sam Jones around 1895 and was about 38' long.

## A View of the Causeway, a Menhaden Steamer and a Party Boat



The photograph above, taken sometime after 1902, gives us an uncommon view of the causeway and shipyard activities. At right, the James yard has at least one vessel under construction and we can see that the boiler is fired and steam is up in the saw shed. The Burnham yard is hidden from view by the buildings on Corporation Wharf but one completed schooner and at least one vessel in frame can be seen in the A.D. Story yard at left.



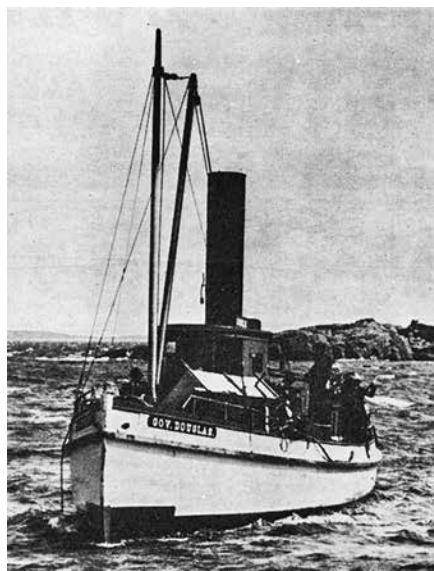
At 156' long, the menhaden steamer *Rollin E. Mason* (launched May 23, 1911) was one of A.D. Story's largest vessels. The steamer was towed to Portland, Maine, for installation of its heavy equipment and interior finishing before heading to Long Island Sound to begin its fishing career. While we don't have any photos showing the deck layout or superstructures of the *Mason*, Mystic Seaport has a model of the vessel in their collection that shows the general configuration. The *Rollin E. Mason* worked in the menhaden fishery of Long Island Sound until March of 1917 when it was sold to the Royal Canadian Navy for patrol and minesweeping duties. Renamed *P.V.V.*, the vessel sailed out of Sydney, Nova Scotia, and worked alongside six other similarly converted New England built menhaden steamers. After the end of WWI all seven steamers were returned to their former owners, the *Mason* arrived back in the US in April 1919. The steamer continued to work in the menhaden fishery until it was wrecked at New London, Connecticut, in the Hurricane of 1938.





## Gov. Douglass, ex. Empress A Granite Steamer and an Essex Fishery

The 60' long passenger boat *Empress* was launched from the A.D. Story shipyard on July 3, 1900. Originally fitted with a gasoline engine and delivered to Beverly, *Empress* would have three different types of propulsion during a career spanning over 70 years. After a short time in Beverly the vessel was sold to Maine where it was converted to steam power. Now renamed *Governor Douglass* and sporting a tall smokestack, the little vessel carried passengers, mail and small freight in the waters around Boothbay Harbor and Monhegan Island, Maine. *Governor Douglass* was eventually converted to diesel power and worked as a coastwise tanker until 1953 when an explosion onboard killed a crewmember and sank the vessel in Portland Harbor. But that wasn't the end of *Governor Douglass*, the boat was raised and converted into a tugboat, continuing in service until 1971.



Launched in March of 1895, the 124' long steamer *John Wise* was built by A.D. Story to his own account. In this icy scene, the sheer size and bulk of the steamer can't be hidden by the two other vessels under construction in the Story yard.



*John Wise* was used for freighting granite from Deer Isle, Maine, to Boston and was also engaged in building stone breakwaters and bulkheads. The boiler and machinery were installed aft, powering twin screws, the pilothouse was located at the bow of the vessel. It is fitting that a ship engaged in such a demanding trade is named after Essex's own Rev John Wise who was known as a strongman in his time (perhaps more famously, he also first articulated and published the phrase "taxation without representation is tyranny").

## Topsfield Vocational Academy Garvey Crew

The garvey crew from Topsfield Vocational Academy continued their work on the bottom of the boat, starting with the spray rails that they previously scarfed and glued together. Once unclamped and checked for straightness, the crew sent the rails through the planer to clean them up and bring the pieces to the exact dimensions needed. After that each rail was dry fitted before being epoxied and screwed into place.

After this, the crew turned their attention to fiberglassing the stern transom and motor well, covering the work with peel ply to give a smoother finished surface. They then turned to cleaning up the bottom of the boat in preparation for paint. They started by removing the peel ply from the newly fiberglassed transom before turning their attention to the spray rails. Using hand planes, they knocked off the outside corners of the spray rails, then switched to sandpaper to soften the edge further.

With that work done, the crew laid out salvaged bronze rub strips on the skegs and centerline before cutting them to length and filing the cut ends to make them nice and smooth.



The *Mary W. Somers* was a welcome addition to the waterfront of Goose Bay off the Port Tobacco River. It arrived in early March, was welcomed in the local press on March 23 and by the sports writer of the *Washington Post* on April 13. Add that to the welcome by Ben Bowie, proprietor of the Goose Bay Camp Ground and Marina, who provided dockage at the end of Dock A by jetting in six utility poles for the *Mary W. Somers* at no charge.

This was followed in November with a grant from the Maryland Heritage Commission for \$2,000 to be used to enable the *Somers* to participate in The Charles County Old Lyne Days May 12-13 at Smallwood State Park. Coincidentally, to help us in this effort I received a postcard from a volunteer in Ohio addressed to *Mary W. Somers*, Port Tobacco, Maryland. Luckily for us the postmaster saw the connection and put it in my box. Within days Wilkie Woodward arrived at my house with his box of tools. When I took him to inspect the *Somers* at her dock we were surprised to find that the rudder blade had become disconnected from the rudder post and was lying on the bottom.

Typical of our good luck the sawmill had just milled a white oak timber 6"x10"x6', just the size Wilkie needed to shape a new rudder post.



## Mary W. Somers

### Phase II

By Ray Hartjen

Our next challenge was to create a new centerboard that measured 2"x4'x12'. Back to the sawmill to secure six planks 2"x8"x12'. Much to our amazement the mill operator had just what we required in green white oak that had recently been milled. The cost was \$60, exactly what Chapelle noted in his 1941 book 40 years earlier.

Another volunteer appeared at our workshop just as we were undertaking the pinning together the six planks with 1/2" stainless steel rods. This turned out to be a mistake which showed itself later on as we got under sail.



With rudder and centerboard in hand, I now needed to focus on performing five live-pool splices in six strand 5/8" wire rigging. Four involved deadeyes for the shrouds and one a simple loop for the bow stay.



The time between the arrival and the grant was only five months. Several months were consumed to accomplish the above rigging items.

Our next challenge involved the running rigging and associated items like 15 12" mast hoops from Pert Lowell Co, nylon gold rope from Columbia Rope Co and associated wooden blocks. The halyard for the mainsail was a 5/1 tackle with a 40' rise amounting to 200' feet of 5/8" line which had to be spliced and properly whipped. So it went for the main sheets and jib sheets.

Time was consumed bringing on board the mainsail and jib, both 12oz cotton canvas, that had to be lashed to the respective mast hoops and jib sliders. By the beginning of

May we were ready to travel up the Potomac River to Smallwood Park. Here we engaged the use of a friends 20' ski boat with outdrive to be lashed on the starboard side amidships. On board we had all of the new standing and running rigging, the sails and the new centerboard, all of which would be installed on the boat while at the park.



Visitors to the Old Lyne Day event flocked to see the skipjack up close. In addition to having front seats to the boat they were treated to balladeer Tom Wisner and his troupe of three singing songs celebrating the Chesapeake Bay such as "Chesapeake Borne," his most well known theme song.



In the meantime I had been hoisted in a boatswain chair to the top of the mast with the objective of hanging the port and starboard shrouds on the hounds and placing the bow stay over the top of the mast. My big mistake in this effort was unbolting the three shive block while having tied off my chair securely. As it turned out the block was very heavy and after many hours of trying to re-secure it I gave up and tied it to its mounting bracket with a separate piece of rope.

With the weekend events over, come Monday morning we, Wilkie and I, were faced with the final preparations for getting under sail. Getting the 4' wide centerboard inside its slot required that we were in water deep enough to undertake this effort. We had arranged for lines down the centerboard slot pulled out to one side and attached to both ends of the board. We then dropped it over the side, being of green white oak it sank. With some effort we were able to pull it up inside the slot with bow part secured at its highest level and we then pulled the aft of the board in. It was so arranged that the aft end could be dropped when needed to serve the purpose of keeping the boat moving forward instead of sliding sideways.

We were then ready to get underway. All pieces were ready. We raised the sails and began to sail out of the harbor to the Potomac River and head south back to Goose Bay. Unfortunately I misjudged the amount of water adjacent to the channel marking spider and we went aground. The bad part of this was it was adjacent to the Naval Ordnance Station disposal grounds.

While we were there several naval personnel appeared in white coveralls. They

were there to set off charges that were used to shake the ground to set off other ordinances that had been deposited there over the course of the week. Fortunately the tide was rising and before we knew it we were underway again and away from the danger.

It was a clear day with increasing northerly winds. We were under all 1200sf of sail. Not a single thought given to reefing. The boom on a skipjack is as long as the boat is on deck. This thin spar was under great pressure with all of that sail above it. Much to our dismay it broke a third of the way aft of the mast. We went to work gathering together every piece of rope and things like boat hooks and broom handles lashing onto the break, enough so we could proceed south.

With the wind on our beam we began to heel, drastically so. Our boat managed to dip its lee rail under, coming up with a 12" fish on its deck. It didn't stay there long as the next puff dipped our rail under again and off it swam.

On the trip from Smallwood Park to Goose Bay one slowly rounds a protrusion of land so that at one point winds are abeam and then aft. As we approached the entrance to the Port Tobacco river we were far off to the Virginia side of the Potomac. My friend with the water ski boat was supposed to meet us at that time to bring us into Goose Bay. As planned he came out to do the job but saw us so far away, close to Virginia, he concluded

that it couldn't have been us and returned without helping. We were unable to come about due to the heavy wind and its direction.

We were now facing south charging down the Potomac River with following seas. My mind began racing, searching for a way out of our predicament. The day was getting on. We had no running lights. One obvious solution was to sail south until we reached Cobb island and pull inside there but that would be well after sunset. The alternative was a tiny harbor just north of the Route 301 bridge on the east side of the river. Its entrance was protected by a rock jetty with the harbor facilities to the south of the entrance. To allow for sideways slippage I headed directly for the end of the jetty. At the very last minute I veered slightly to the right and we slid into the harbor and onto the shore across the way from the harbor facilities. It was like going inside a house as at that point there was none of the northerly wind that had chased us.

A telephone booth was within a stone's throw of us but on the other side of a body of water. I eventually made my way through a close community, knocked on a door asking for permission to use their phone. I was able to gain the help of a neighbor who picked us up and brought us to my home. When we left the *Somers* with bow in the shore she was tied to a tree with the decision to leave her there until we could bring the water ski boat to tow her back to Goose Bay.



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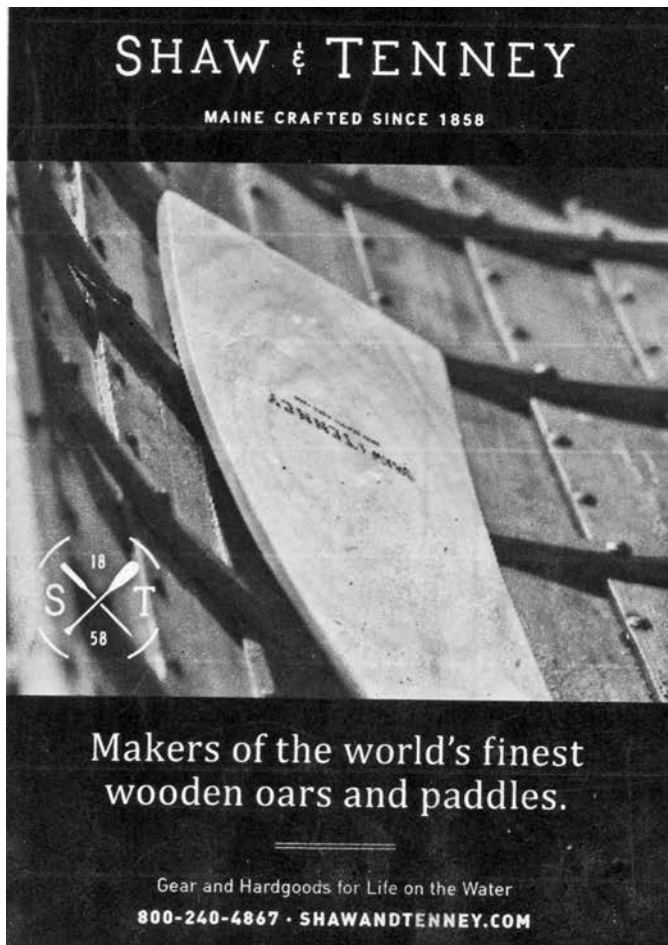


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## Closer to the Sea

After 20 years of backyard boat building we have finally moved *Helge* closer to the sea. We hired Brownell Trucking and their crane for the move to East Boston where we will commission the boat. *Helge's* wheelhouse and bow railings are too tall for the road so they were constructed for easy removal. It was very satisfying to mount them for their final time.

We hired AMEX to paint the hull and deck. The entire boat was covered with International 262 and top coated with International Polyurethane 990. The 262 is tough as nails. A storm came through mid painting which caused the scaffolding to bang against the boat. Some of the top color was damaged but the underlying 262 epoxy held tough.

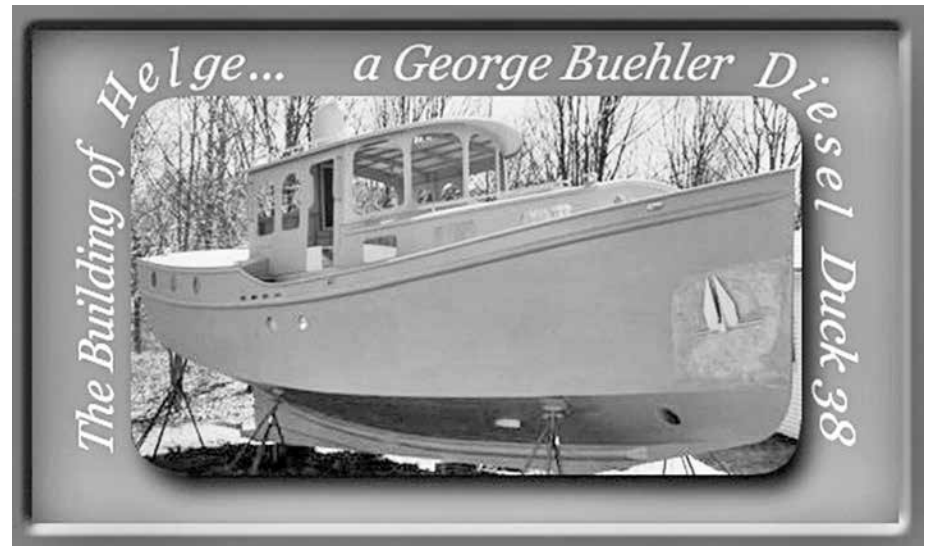
The decks were treated with walnut shells as an anti skid. Walnut was chosen over sand as it tends to wear with the paint instead of ripping itself loose.

The 20-year-old Lexan windows finally started to craze. I fabricated a new set which made painting easier as the old ones were used for masking.

We are SO looking forward to a launch this summer 2019!

## The Building of *Helge* A George Buehler Diesel Duck Part 20

Wendell Gallagher is building a Buehler Diesel Duck 38. He had the steel hull built at a yard and trucked to his home and is doing the rest himself.



## Editor Comments

Well, from here on (since 2019) those wishing to follow *Helge* into his future has to do so on Instagram, something we cannot do so we now bid him adio and trust that he is long since afloat and rewarding his builder for all his incredibly detailed hands on construction of his dream boat.

It was this DIY project with no expense spared using top quality materials and components that attracted my attention and his builder graciously gave us the OK to reprint it on our pages over the past many months. Why'd he do it? Read on:

"I lived on a Marine Trader 34' Aft Cabin for several years. It was from that experience I determined what I liked and disliked in a boat. Wanting a larger and more economical home, I started looking around and quickly discovered that I needed to build my next boat from scratch. I can't remember how I stumbled across the plans to George Buehler's Diesel Ducks, but it was love at first sight.

*Helge* is named for my grandfather. He was an extremely talented cabinet maker. I'm hoping my woodworking projects make him proud.

Instead of building the entire boat from scratch, I had Custom Steel Boats in North Carolina weld up the hull and house for me. They were very easy to work with and allowed me to oversee many different phases of construction.

Some of the reasons for choosing *Helge*:

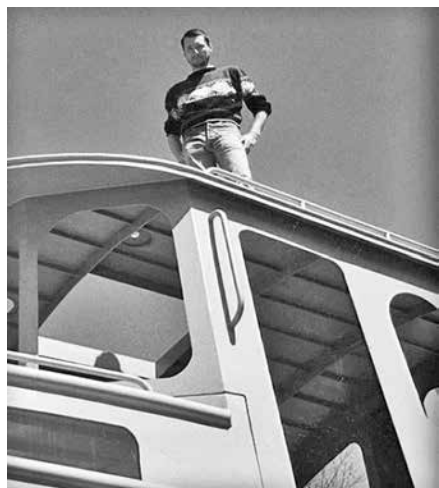
1. A sturdy hull of steel. A small docking mishap with the Marine Trader revealed how vulnerable fiberglass can be.

2. Economical to run. *Helge* should burn roughly one gallon per hour while speeding along at 6 to 7 knots. That will give him a range of over 4,000 miles.

3. Self reliant. *Helge*'s electrical system will be solar powered. I'm not a fan of fly bridges so we'll have ample real estate for solar collectors and a hot water heater.

4. Roomy. *Helge* has 7' overheads and is large enough for two people to live aboard comfortably, while remaining small enough to handle alone.

5. Pleasant to look at. Some think the Diesel Ducks are strange. Frankly, I love their sheer bows and curved decks. It's hard to put your finger on, but they just look right.



## Thickened Epoxy Application

By Mike Lenemen

Reprinted from Epoxyworks



My idea for this thickened epoxy application method was borrowed from my grandfather, a notable oil painter. What I remember the most about him is how he painted. He used standard oil paints but did not use a brush. Instead, he painted with cake decorating cones and his fingers.

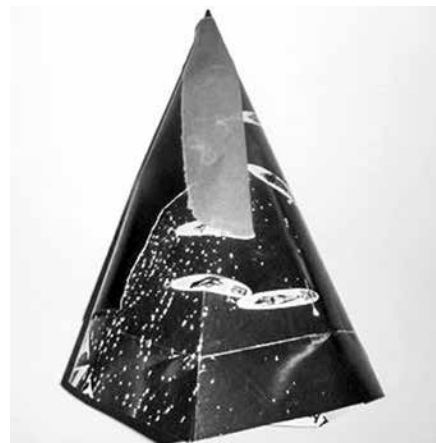
One day, when I was working on applying some thickened WEST SYSTEM® Epoxy, I had an epiphany, my grandfather used cake decorating cones to "draw" with oil paints and he was very accurate with them, maybe that would work with thickened epoxy. It has about the same consistency (viscosity) as oil paints.

I had never really decorated a cake before but I remembered how he made his cones. I've borrowed his approach as an economical and neat way to apply thickened epoxy.

First, find some paper that the epoxy won't bleed through. I prefer to use high quality coated paper from magazines or brochures. I get a lot of junk mail and am happy to "recirculate" the slick paper stock this way.



Roll a piece of glossy paper into a cone for thickened epoxy application. Starting in the middle of the page, roll the sheet into a cone. Keep the cone rolled into a conical shape by taping it closed.



Tape your thickened epoxy application cone shut, then trim off the points at the flared end.

Cut the flared end of the cone into a straight line and voila, you are ready to fill the cone with thickened epoxy.

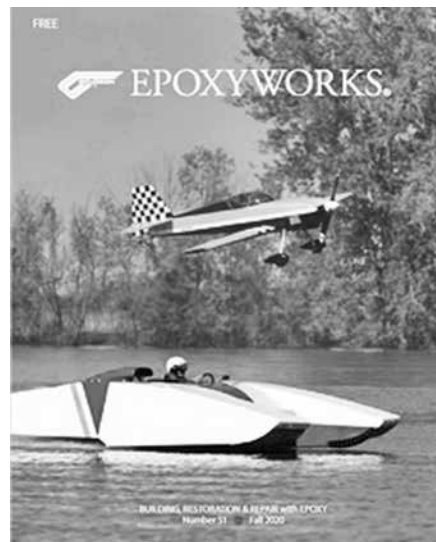
The thickened epoxy should be the consistency of smooth peanut butter. After you have filled the cone (never to capacity), you can fold over the flared end and squeeze it like a toothpaste tube.



Fill partway, then roll the flared end closed. Trim the tip to the desired opening size.

Snip off the pointed end to get the desired opening or nozzle.

Squeeze the epoxy out. When more epoxy is needed, simply start rolling up the flared (closed) end of the tube as you would with a tube of toothpaste. To make a nice fillet, squeeze a bead into the joint and then smooth the fillet with your gloved thumb or the rounded end of an epoxy mixing stick. When all the epoxy has been squeezed out, simply throw away the paper tube.





## Time, Tide and the Rehabilitation of the *Sylvina W. Beal*

Harold Burnham and Mary Kay Taylor

Here on the marsh at the edge of the Essex River the ebb and flow of the tide is central to our life and work. While it is true that “time and tide wait for no man,” sometimes, just when it seems the time is right, we are faced with the wrong tide. In those moments it is important to take a breath, reassess and remember that there will be other tides and better times.

We undertook the rehabilitation of the *Sylvina W. Beal* to help keep the tradition of wooden shipbuilding alive. We want to see this project benefit our community and engage and inspire others to value our rich cultural heritage. Until recently we were looking forward to laying the *Beal*’s new keel this coming September 2021 and relaunching her in 2022. In order to do that it would take all of us pulling together right now and, unfortunately, now is simply the wrong time.

It has been ten years since we built the *Ardelle*, and after we finish the *Beal* we’re not sure how many of these boats we’ve got left in us. So we figure we might as well make the most of this project and do it when it will benefit the most people and the community the most.

With this in mind we have decided to wait for the next tide (really, the next season) and lay the new keel in September 2022 and launch her in 2023. Doing this will not only give us more time to better prepare for the work, but also give the Shipbuilding Museum and the Maritime Gloucester more time to make the most of it for the communities and schools they serve. There is enough preparatory work to keep us all busy until then and the more we do now the better the vessel and the community will come together when the time is right.

We continue to spend a lot of our time working on the *Beal*. Much of her design is complete, a good deal of wood is cut and we keep working to get ready for the project. Mary Kay and I are grateful for the support we received from the Mass Cultural Council and a number of individuals who have bought planks, trunnels and more. We have purchased most of the bronze fastenings we will need for the vessel, a generator, sails and other accessories.

Thanks to local tree companies and arborists, the logs keep coming. We appreciate the help that several people have provided (in

a safe and socially distant way) as well as the help so many others have offered. Since the pandemic has been raging we have wanted to be part of the solution and not part the problem. With the exception of those socially distant helpers mentioned above, Harold has done most of the physical work on the boat alone. Although he enjoys this time, he misses the mug ups, the long lunches, the stories, the sharing of information, the camaraderie and, of course, the help.

Relaunching the *Beal* in the spring of 2023 will give us plenty of time to tune her up and win the Esperanto Cup at Gloucester’s 400th anniversary Schooner festival. Wouldn’t that be fun!

Really, we think things are about to get a whole lot better for all of us and that we will all be working and sailing together in the not so distant future. Until then we hope you understand why we feel it is better to wait and do this project when the tide and time are both in our favor.

For now we will try to keep this blog up in the hopes that these posts will help keep you connected with this cool project and wonderful old boat.



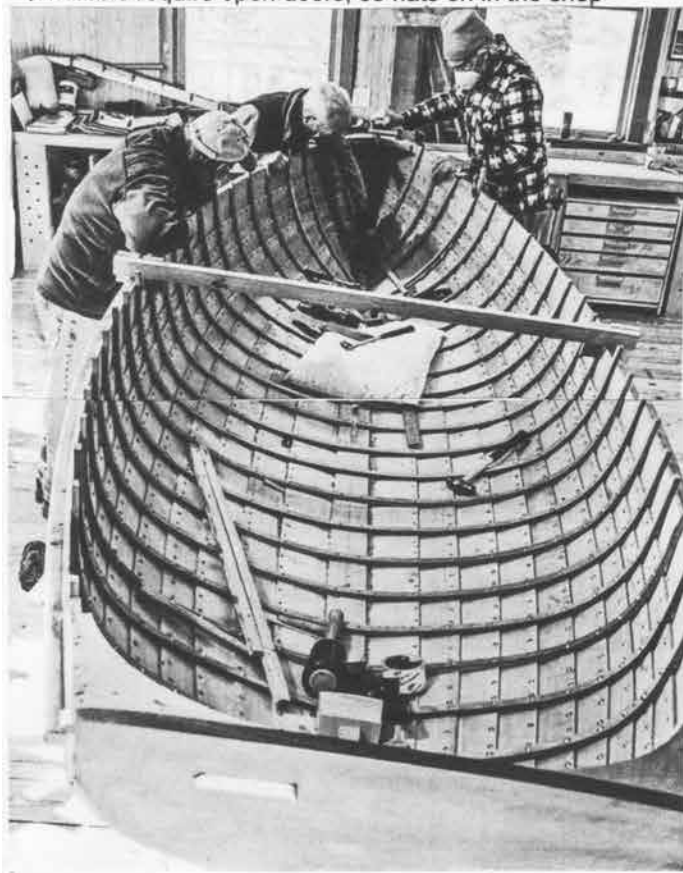


## ★ THE EAST END CLASSIC BOAT SOCIETY ★

These are the men that sailed and manned,  
Worked her and drove her from land to land.  
Most of 'em gone, as the ships are gone,  
For times must change, as the old words run,  
And men change with 'em, we know full well;  
For worse or for better? Time will tell.  
This only is certain---Ships and men,  
We never shall build their like again.

Activity at the shop continues in the new year. Volunteers have kept to our Covid protocols and we have great expectations for 2021.

The raffle boat is coming along with the hope of having festival events to attend in 2021. Chilly work as the protocols require open doors, so hats on in the shop



The launch project has the engine about ready to go, all due to our chief engineer's fine tuning



How many volunteers does it take to connect the engine to the shaft? At least four

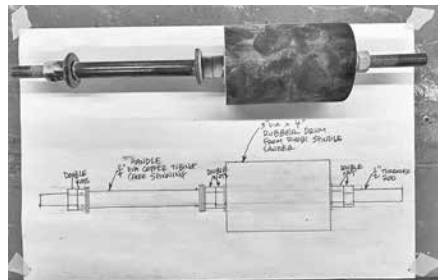


The Joel White skiff is almost completely restored. It will be a fine addition to our list of restorations



A black and white photograph of a vintage Columbia Family Scale. The scale is circular with a large, dark, hexagonal handle on top. The dial face is light-colored with a dark border. The dial has two concentric scales: an outer scale with numbers 1 through 10 and 11 through 20, and an inner scale with numbers 1 through 10. The text "COLUMBIA" is printed in the center, with "IN POUNDS" below it. Below the dial, it says "BY CURTIS" and "FAMILY SCALE". The scale is resting on a wooden surface, and a wooden beam is visible in the background.

## Part 4

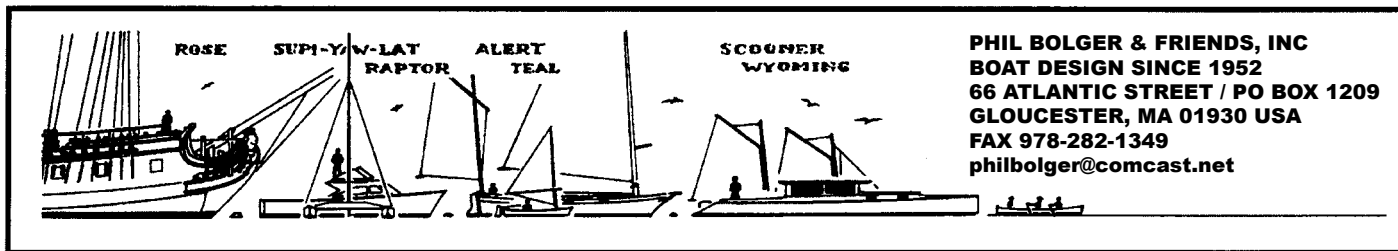


Educating Ben about problem solving, sharing some of my woodworking skills and teaching tool safety is priceless. I'm 73 years old and there are few things I do that might interest a 16-year-old or that we can do together.

Both of my 16-year-old granddaughters can handle a router, use a battery drill to drive screws, run a drill press and make complicated cuts on a band saw. If I won that \$900 million lottery prize, it wouldn't make me any wealthier.

## BAY of MAINE BOATS

40 – *Messing About in Boats*, April 2021



Looking at a few aesthetic and functional details on this production hull from the late 1950s, worthwhile studying in 2021 and having seen *Ruffler* from all sorts of angles, be it under restoration in the shed, on the trailer to her launching, afloat at rest, then ambling and finally powering along at W.O.T., let's finally look at a number of particular functional solutions in her cockpit, in her cabin and on her deck, that indeed are proven and some that could use improving.

Apart from details you'd find on much older sailing craft as well, here are some distinct ones that emerged with the introduction of the first internal combustion engines in the late 1890s, then more and more plate glass, various grades of stainless steel, chromed hardware, a few select pieces of plastic, all sorts of functional solutions in proportions pretty much particular to motorboats, pleasure craft, sport fishermen of that era.

On *Ruffler* we'll easily find a dozen items to look at more closely. Also, beyond her overall lines, good to take these in should you look for styling details from that era for your new build. And since very few will ever see her in person and then get near enough to study her this closely, let's do this exploration on these pages. Should we insist on a particular order? Well, in quite a few of these images several of these details come together.

So we'll look at these items as they show up in those pictures from August and November 2020. Outrigger sockets, sliding windows in house and cabin, opening windshield details, compound shapes on cabin and rooftop, deck, cleats, posts, cockpit details, flip and sliding helm seats, ventilation of people and machinery, signal mast, no flying bridge! As before, comments appear below each picture.



#1. Standing on the float there are quite a few of those details quite apart from that patina in her 62nd year. Since she is a sport fisherman, let's look at the outrigger mechanics first. The outrigger receiver is supported by the rotating and outswinging heel joint, in turn fastened to that round reinforcement on her varnished lower wheelhouse flanks. Near the top of that receiver tube the retaining bracket that keeps the receiver and outrigger flush against the house, controlled by that split hinged retaining collar and a few turns on that wingnut to open or set up the retaining collar.

## Phil Bolger & Friends On Design

### Design Column #558 in *MAIB*

31'0"x11'0"x2'6"x2 x 175hp Gasoline

Inboard Engines x 21knots

Displacement approx 9000lbs

Once open, the receiver and outriggers swing out to spread lines, lures and bait well off the hull and thus away from props and rudders. They are then supported and held in place by that inverted fork hinged off the wheelhouse flanks as well with the fork collar sliding along the receiver tube until it hits that adjustable stop collar below on the receiver to control the outriggers' outward movement at a preset angle. Between the outriggers' slender ends and the dimensioning of these pieces of hardware we should have reason to trust these geometries to support the fishing effort.

The heavy work of fishing tuna and swordfish would be done from the fighting chair secured in that flush socket in her cockpit sole. In this view we also notice near deck level the engine heat exhaust vent, the cast bronze starboard navigation light, her fuel filler cap. Up high that curved molding to further define that wheelhouse top edge, the well set in handrails to match your arm length moving along her waterways and top right the rounded over forward wheelhouse edge.

And not noticeable until opened up is that sliding wheelhouse side window panel right along her helm. Finally, the extension of her cabin top side molding running past the house flanks as a well defined styling element via that off white streak separating the wheelhouse glass framing varnished mahogany sides from those lower ones coming from the cabin sides forward. From afar a plain paint scheme might do here. But from up closer, seeing that protruding white molding unarguable adds to her visuals with just that one element of depth on otherwise a flat surface, matching that molding above the glass sections.



#2. We might as well peer through her wheelhouse windows to study quite bit here as well. The old compass is still showing due

north. Then the horizontal shaft, on which a collar slides to push open or pull tight the top hinged wheelhouse windshield halves, the position controlled by the screw knob locking that collar wherever desired. And in the middle just ahead of her companionway an inverted vee set of bracing tubes to help the house sides and roof with this diagonal set of supports. Not sure whether this was done during her build or years later, but suggesting that the wheelhouse is indeed as light in its structural execution as e.g., the sloping uprights look at the rear of the house sides. And it does imply as well why she should not have a flying bridge without significant structural additions to her house verticals, not to mention the roof structure itself which would make those beefed up elements of her substantially more chunky to look at.

Finally, looking up to the windshield upper edge we see how they did that distinct period correct rounded over appearance of her "face" by using light plywood bent over just three rounded supports per side, today suggesting a fiberglass piece instead, except all wood with the underside varnished and the wheelhouse top headliner only beginning abaft the curved panel with that first varnished batten holding its forward edge in place.



#3. This shot taken during her restoration shows her cockpit sole aft with flush rudder stock and actuator access panels and that around the fighting chair socket where you'd also put that big bilge pump during her first relaunching. The laid deck and that flush  $\frac{3}{32}$ " stainless steel trim seems conventional. But it also carries the obvious liability that rain-water and fish gutting gunk will find its way below to risk decay.

Today we'd use a fully glassed plywood sole, raise coamings around these access points, glassed ply panels to keep the rain and gunk out, filling in the vertical distance with modern composite decking mounted to well draining cleats, all readily removable, of course, to end up with a smooth cockpit sole and no fresh water routinely migrating below the cockpit. We would keep those nice full height corner posts, big enough for the projected stresses and to not impale anyone on them, instead of the more labor intensive idea of deck mounted cleats along with their under deck reinforcements and bedding issues over time.





#4. Here that cockpit refreshed and inviting with folding chairs and the table slid into that fighting chair socket below decks.



#5. Some may remember this from that visit of her restoration a few years back, but that seat geometry bears clarifying some. The point is to get it quickly and reliably out of the way when standing at the helm is called for. The seat back is folded against the seat and both are hinged down vertical along that horizontal rod that serves as both hinge point and support attaching the seat to her house structure. To the left the two vertical rods, one of which it takes per seat to set it up horizontally taking most of the crew weight but well braced to the side and fore and aft by that horizontal rod.



#6. And here quickly set up its counterpane to port, ready to serve. Also do notice that panel in the companionway door to open up screened air passage when the door is closed.



#7. Below in her cabin the center panel of that sweeping window arch slides aft to open her cabin up for more fresh air on both sides.



#8. Here the cabin's forward match to the wheelhouse rounded forward edge, accented by that molding. And yes, these ports offer some more light and do open, but inwards, a familiar piece of hardware to this day but a problematic geometry. Rainwater, spray, night dew will always sit in there, testing the gasket and leaving, over time, dust and salt, eventually building up to some muck only removed more often because looking at that from below may bug you while you wearily watch that gasket deteriorate.



#9. And here these ports from below rendered in bare bronze, all sturdy if you can keep your head from colliding with those fine wingnuts. Wiley windows might functionally work better over time with the glass self draining outwards and if you round over the side supports in that Wiley geometry. Of more interest once more the seeming compound curve of the cabin top front, indeed the same construction with curved plywood, a few former ribs and varnished from below, painted white outside.



#10. Here an interesting ventilation detail over the galley via this nice varnished wooden box integrated into the ceiling, with fly screening inside...



#11. ...and the sliding shutter pulled closed...



#12. ...with that ceiling assembly matched with this aft facing exhaust drawing air out by air flowing over the cabin top as she swings on anchor or her mooring. Here also that light signal mast, just supported by its none too broad bolted down metal base, the pivot pin and its lock with that slender cross brace supported by thin cable, the running and anchor lights on top, all seemingly optimistic in their light structures but apparently adequate for a few small signal flags. The light mass involved along with the boat's easier motion side to side and slicing into waves seem to work fine together to keep this piece standing.

And looking aft, the stainless steel framed windshield halves, suspended from their stainless piano hinges, all contrasting with that varnish. Above that rounded over house top front.



#13. On the plans there is shown a post resting on her interior stem face and braced by the foredeck, something the owners pointed out is as yet missing from their restoration effort. You could see how after a few decades that post might have gotten soft just where it comes through the deck. Easy enough to do this winter, perhaps, with plans on hand and the two cockpit examples ready to follow. Either way, the Danforth has its place to starboard with the chain and rode running down into its dedicated locker and that fine yacht braid showing off perfectly curled, ready.



#14. Aluminum outriggers in their chromed sockets and locked in full up position, with various engine vent scoops, bilge pump ports, a discreet chromed lower rub-rail for harder sided dinghies to come along against, the stainless steel protecting her transom corners, the bronze half round along sheer and aft lower rubrail for further protection and visual accent, finally that bronze Egg Harbor script and two generations of owners relaxing this late in the 2020 season.

As to that flying bridge idea, the owners have seen a sister ship or two with such on the wheelhouse top. But they declined copying that idea, not just dramatically altering, if not ruining, her so familiar appearance. But they also saw the structural challenges of trying to reinforce that house top and laterally brace all that weight of bridge structure and then also rapidly see add up some 1,000lbs of folks moving around up there in a structure clearly not set up for this by the original builders, judging by the elegant lean varnished framing all around that wheelhouse.

In conclusion, we note the originality of gauges, equipment maintained, the age correct decay of chrome plating after so many decades in salt water and air, the absence of any modern gadgets, no matter how tempting they might be. Good that we have widespread cell phone coverage, potent but portable VHF radio sets and portable GPS units coming in a range of screen sizes, all fed by discreetly located charge ports, modern electronic safety gear that may be better taken off the boat anyway once she's back on her mooring.

Another thing we notice is the absence of any fiberglass on this production hull from an age when this technology began to influence boat design and production. For instance, the first reflex might be to think that those rounded surfaces of the cabin and house top fronts look like just the forward ends of a one piece resin and glass moulding each, a dedicated investment in particular tooling and separate skill sets that could only pay if it were to support the production of quite a few identical such superstructures. Here we've seen how they did this detail in wood painted outside and varnished below, whether just this once on this boat or across dozens, and clearly durably enough.

Overall, perhaps the "Secret Recipe" of her appearance lies in the mixing of obvious and subtle visual clues to have her come together as a coherent whole. Of course, some may see all that just as an exercise in clichés fashionable in those days. However, whatever one's personal judgment on that era's prevailing style, once you've been attracted to her to begin with, then you might

as well keep that total package as she was designed and built from broad visuals such as the distinctive curves in her hull lines, the silhouettes of solid and transparent surfaces, the contrast of varnish and paint, location and shape of simple moldings, all the way down to the era correct functional details.

Following some presumably better thinking, or even a succession of styles across the six plus decades life of this boat, it would have been easy to soon lose your conceptual balance, invest time and resources in various impulses that may never come to amount to a coherent whole, never quite a convincing combination of broad strokes and complementary smaller details.

And periodically we see modern reinterpretations of a certain era of style afloat and not all work, with something missing or something else overdone. And that before we face the hard fact that not every old boat is a classic boat. If you'd find one pretty much already ruined and unlikely to ever be restorable to original condition, then there is little to lose by squeezing a few more seasons out of her as she is if her structural integrity has not been ruined as well. In fact, dead ones have become donors of hardware, certain bits and pieces to help a sound hull continue on more years and decades.

So there is, not just familiar to these owners, inevitably to emerge a potentially contentious set of ideas, assumptions to question, prejudices to explore over a glass, or across many years of deliberation of what to do next on her, or to her (!), whether to update certain details or not, to perhaps alter

her substantially with add ons or even radical surgery driven by some justification, urges, counsel by others who may walk away from those ideas later. These thoughts and temptations have no doubt been realities for these owners here as well and yet clearly resisted, as they used and maintained her across many decades now, content with what she has always been and clearly will continue to be in their hands. Elegant and good enough in her function in their lives.

To wrap up this discussion, I am clearly in the camp of keeping worthy originals as original as plausible as the owners of *Ruffler* have successfully demonstrated for the world to see season after season with their distinct period correct hull built to Design #5-57 Egg Harbor-31. And, judging by Phil's writing, it seems highly likely he'd agree and also in support of other designers' elegant offers as well.

**NEW MODEL EGG HARBOR 31**

This sport cruiser may be ordered as a 2 or 4 sleeper. Still available in our model 26. Both models have the same high quality standards of material and workmanship.

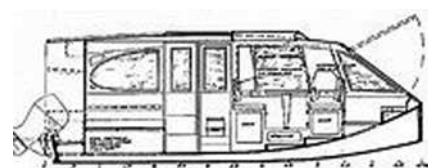
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Finally, once you understand her, including what you don't want to do with this design, would there be any reason to not build a new one exactly as she is here? The only improvements to kick around, depending upon budgets, might be the option of installing modern lightweight high performance four cylinder Diesels to retain her speed but offer quite a bit more range per fill-up. And yet, that relaxed typical V8 growl really is part of her "signature." So, just a modern fuel injected V8 offering typically higher output and thus perhaps downsized to add up to better fuel economy overall at the same speeds, optionally a centrifugal blower added to exponentially jack her speed up on demand only while retaining decent economy and of course that appealing exhaust note.

Good that this sort of tinkering and fooling around with would happen under the engine covers only, leaving the option open to revert to the original.

Next issue, after these three sequences of looking at three actually built boats with quite different stories, 29' Newfoundland Catboat, 23' Dipping Lugger Seabird '86, twin screw Egg Harbor-31, we will settle back to looking just at designs, black lines on white paper, perhaps a photo or two if available for that set of plans. Perhaps even just a short discussion format of the type Phil cultivated early in his contributions to the pages of *MAIB*. Not sure though, that I could do that. We'll see.





**Brad Murray's Heavyweight gift: *Canoes of Oceania*:** "My new doorstop arrived today."

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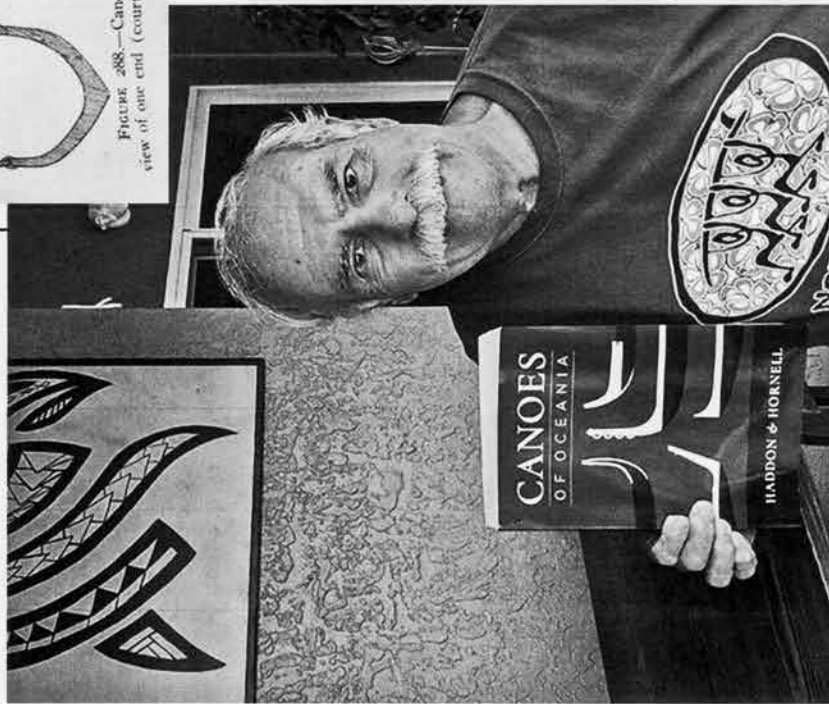


Photo submitted by Brad

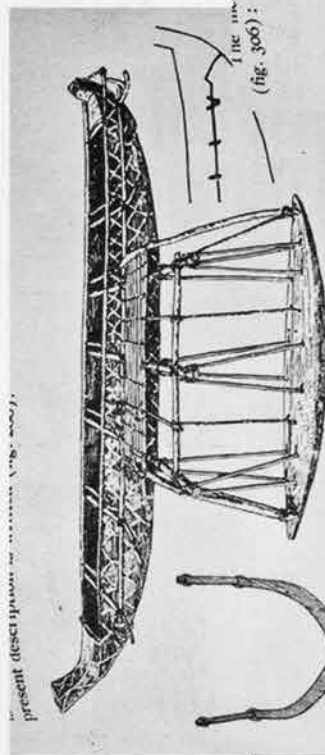


FIGURE 288.—Canoe of Kapingamarangi, Caroline Islands, side view, cross view of one end (courtesy of Hamburg Museum für Völkerkunde).

## Photos from *Canoes of Oceania*

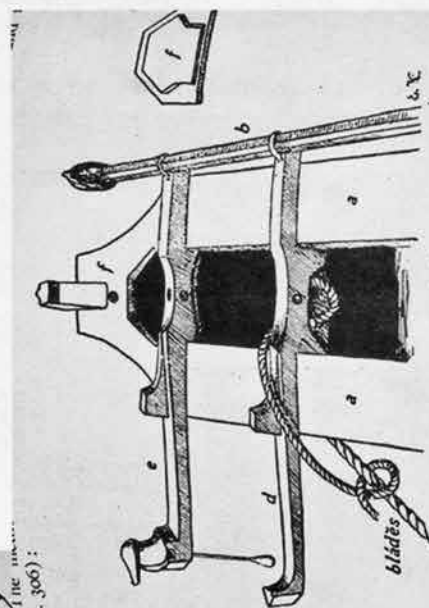


FIGURE 305.—Head of Palau *karf*: a, side decking or waterway; b, lee string; c, second bar (*haod kutling*) to which tack of sail is made; d, second bar.

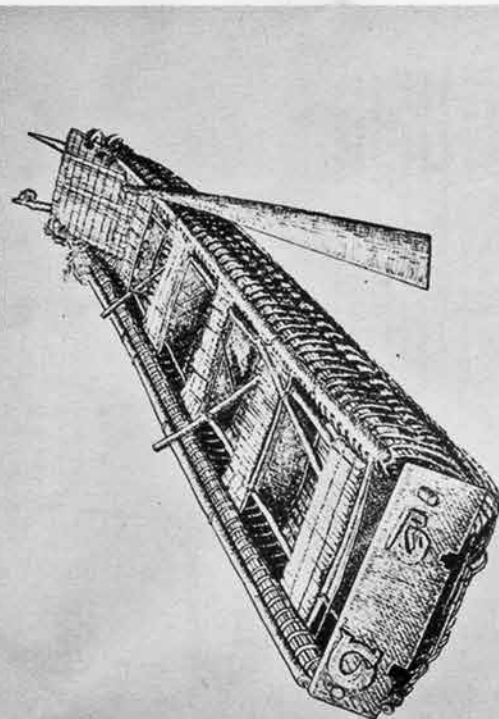


FIGURE 148.—Moriori sea-going canoe raft, propelled by oars; length 13 feet 3 inches; width over stern 10.25 inches (after Skinner, 1910).

... and of H. L. Skinner (1910, 1923, 1928), is known with certainty of Moriori ethnology; to further details.



Although not in commercial production yet, the next advance in the battery development field may be the Graphene battery. According to reports, such a battery will have more power and a faster charging rate than current Lithium ion batteries we have today. In addition, this type of battery is not heat sensitive as are Lithium ion batteries.

If you are going to be cruising in the eastern Mediterranean Sea you might want to be careful about your GPS readings, according to an alert published by the US Maritime Administration. We have had problems with GPS readings along the coastal waters of the US, but the Middle East seems to be the “hot” spot of the moment. However, according to an article in *BoatU.S. Magazine* (February/March 2021, pp 34-36), our GPS receivers may have problems if a proposed 5G implementation takes effect. Keeping a good watch when underway is always a good idea.

Along this same line is an article in the January 2021 issue of *Maritime Reporter and Engineering News* (pp 12-13) on the possible affect of cosmic rays on computer chips. Reportedly, the impact of the cosmic ray could change the machine language (the “0” and the “1” the other way). This is not good!

While rare, the impact of switching of computer instructions has been considered in some “unexplainable” computer glitches that resulted in damage, injuries and loss of life. If your autopilot suddenly changes the course of your vessel, it might have been hit by a cosmic ray (but I doubt if such an argument would be accepted in most courts if there was damage).

Three people on the way to Hawaii on a sailboat ran into trouble and called for help. They were rescued by a container ship and the damaged boat abandoned. The boat was found by a fisherman and towed in. I keep reading about people being rescued from boats in distress and the boats later being found and recovered. Every time I do, I think of the cliché that one climbs up into the life raft from the sinking vessel, not down into the life raft. If it is still afloat and not leaking, in many cases you can stay with the boat safely, not comfortably, but probably safely. Of course, it is up to those on board as to how much danger they are in and a call for help is always a good idea because things can still go wrong.

Capt Kelly Sweeney writes a monthly column in *Professional Mariner* that focuses on those subjects that affect the professional mariner. In the February 2021 issue his column on foul weather gear is pertinent to the recreational boating public. In this case, he writes about choosing proper foul weather gear for use on the water. Not all foul weather gear is the same and what works in some conditions may not be effective in other conditions.

When I was on the water a lot I found that the rain gear I had for landside use was not sufficient on a boat in heavy wind and rain. I finally purchased two sets of suitable foul weather gear (coat/hood, bib, red with reflective patches, etc) for my wife and me for what then was a lot of money. The outfit, made by High Seas, has done its job for the last 30 (or so) years and was worth the cost. Since the purpose of the foul weather gear is to keep warm and dry (as well as fit well), I suggest visiting a store that sells such and see what you are buying (quality, comfort fit, etc) rather than shopping online. I purchased my jacket one size too large so I could fit the PFD jacket under it. The PFD stayed dry and



## From the Lee Rail

By C. Henry Depew

I had a bit more insulation between me and the outer gear.

Local knowledge can be very important for safe and enjoyable boating. The channel into Shell Point has a rock at the east side about two-thirds of the way in that can cause damage. This obstruction is only a problem at low to medium tides to boats drawing more than 2'. Simply steering a bit to the west in that part of the channel causes all to be well. Steering too far west and the boat will go aground on the sand bank on the west side of the channel. After making the wide turn in front of the beach (shoaling at the turn mark) I need to stick close to the markers until almost to the next turn in the channel where I need to steer into the middle of the channel. None of the above shows on any of the paper or electronic charts, and if I do not zig and zag at the proper locations my boat may go aground.

Local knowledge is also important when using the Panacea channel. This federally marked (but not maintained) channel has some shoaling that does not show on

any of the charts. When I took my Sisu 26 (draws 3') to the marina there, I had a neighbor along who used the channel a couple of times a month. He guided me safely around the shoal areas in the channel. Otherwise the boat would have been aground in the channel. If you are not sure about an area, ask some of the locals for advice.

Do you wear some type of shoes when on board? If not, you should consider doing so as a hurt foot can be a major problem when out on the water. When my wife and I were racing small sailboats we wore skin diver booties to protect our feet and help keep them warm. If we had to get out of the boat for some reason our feet were protected from what could be in the sand or grass under us. Granted, they were not much good when dealing with oysters but otherwise were very useful. The old time sailors wore shoes/booties when on deck or climbing the rigging. Try climbing a rung latter without shoes some time and you will get the idea.

Do you use the phonetic alphabet any time? I learned it when I was a private pilot. “Tango Foxtrot Charlie” was the call sign of the Cessna 152 I usually rented. This came to mind the other day when I was on the phone with a customer service representative and gave him my wife’s email address. He came back with the spelling using the phonetic alphabet to check the spelling. He had it wrong by one letter as “Depew” can be spelled a number of ways. I corrected him using the phonetic alphabet and all was well.

### 35th Annual small boat meet

### POTLUCK

The pot luck dinner remains a question. The Community Center is reserved, though. Maybe it'll be outside? But, a speaker, if possible, is unknown. -Hugh

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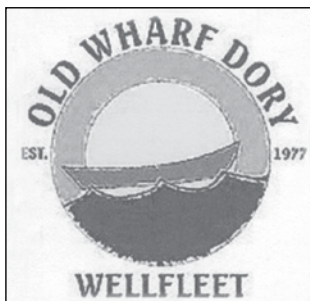


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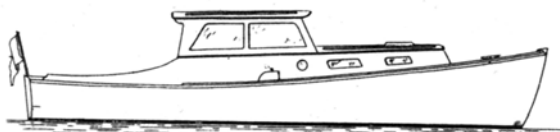
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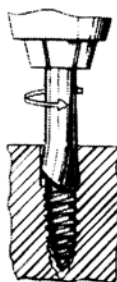
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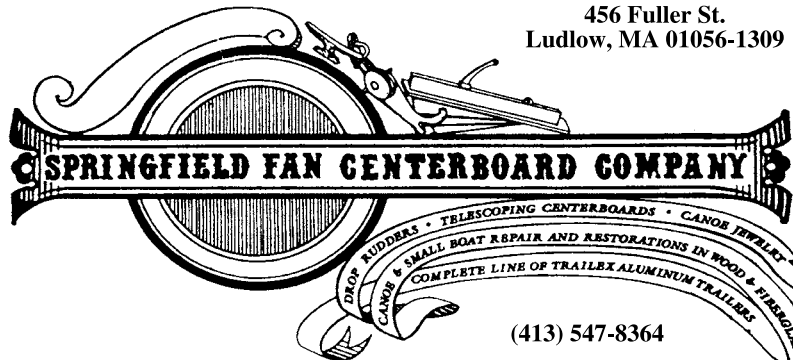
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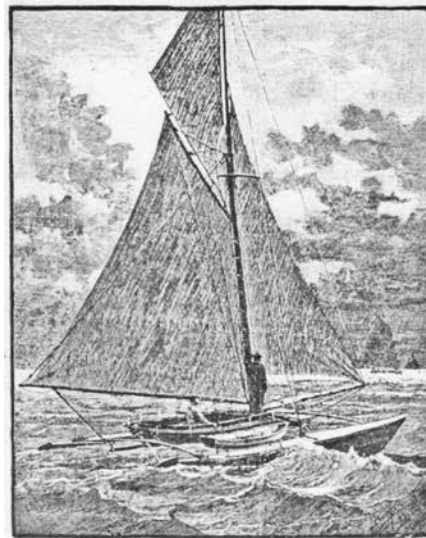
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